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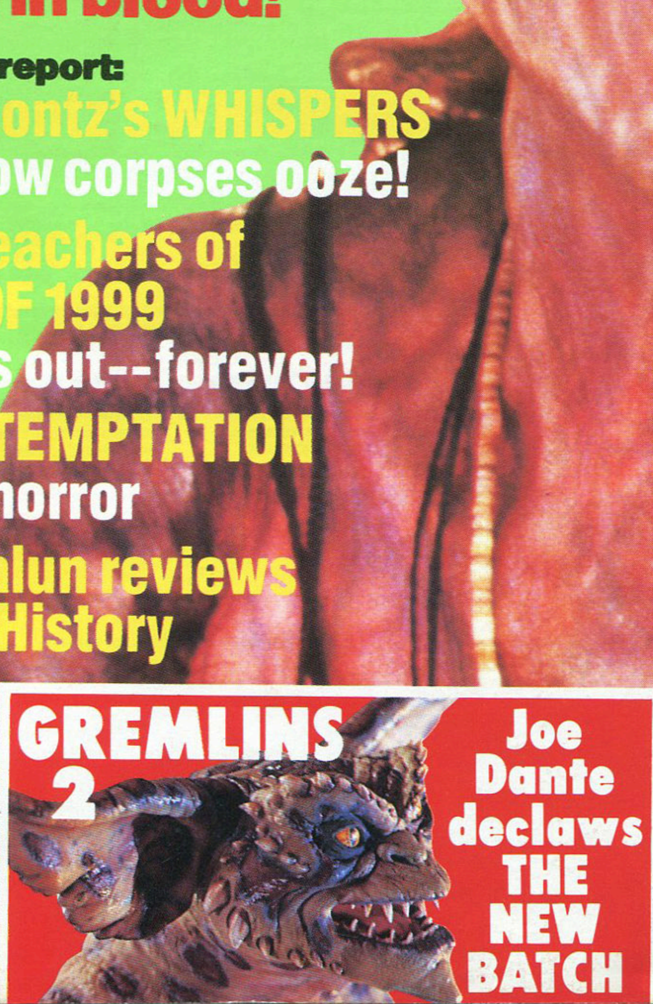
GREMLINS 2



Joe Dante declaws THE NEW BATCH

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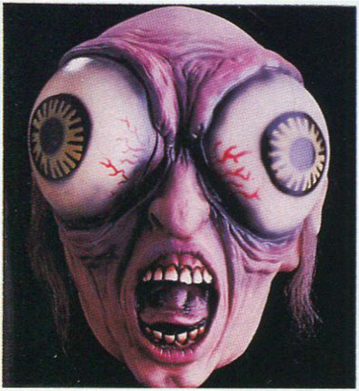
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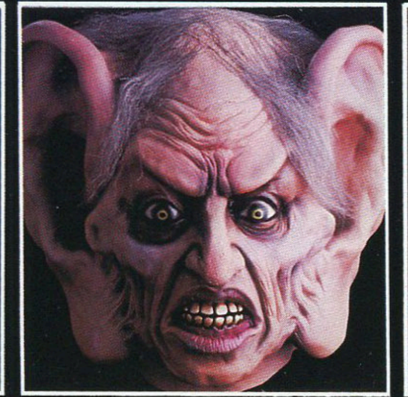
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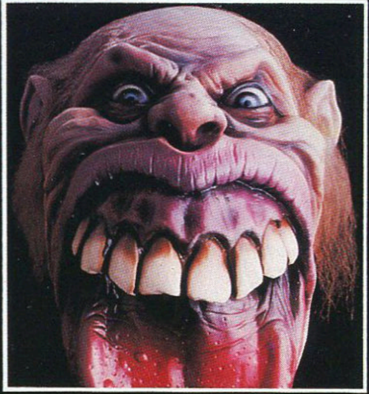
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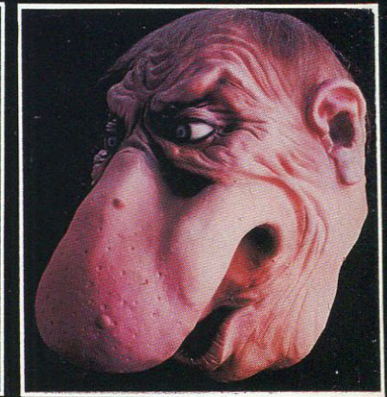
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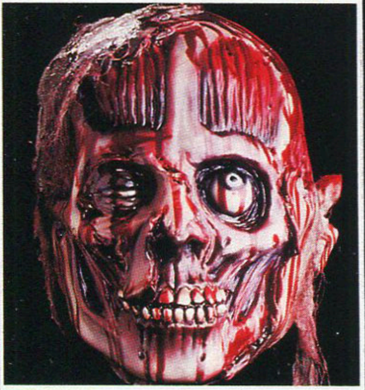
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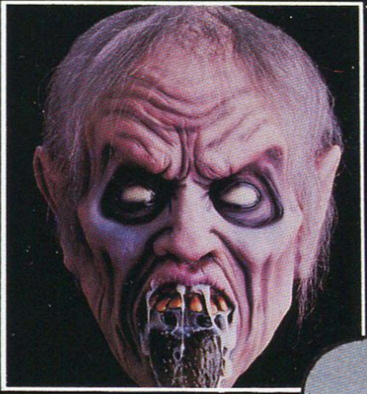
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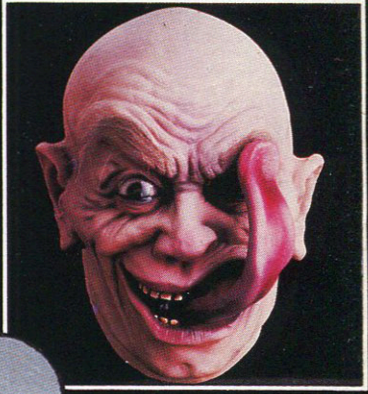
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GOREZONE

August 1990
GOREZONE # 15

VISCERA

4 BLOOD FEST
Fear and loathing in Montreal

6 GUT REACTIONS
More censorship, more injustice, more complaints

8 PROFILE: JOE DANTE
Why did Joe Dante deign to sequelize his own "Gremlins," you ask? Then you've never seen "Howling II," we take it.

14 PIECE O' MIND
They're dead, they walk, and we love 'em!

18 PROFILE: "CLASS OF 1999" TEACHERS
Pam Grier, John P. Ryan and Patrick Kilpatrick are some of the nicest murderous cyborgs you'll ever meet.

22 PROFILE: STEVE JOHNSON
"Highway to Hell" allows the distinctive FX champ a chance to get weird.

27 POSTER SECTION
"Highway to Hell," "F/X," "Class of 1999" and Rob Bottin's eye-popping "Total Recall"

44 MAKEUP FX LAB
Ed French details his assignment to set a new standard for putrescent orb-oozing.

49 HORRORSCOPE
"Def By Temptation" isn't blaxploitation, vows the film's writer/director/star.

52 FICTION
Wayne Allen Sallee probes Chicago's seamy underbelly in "Face Value."

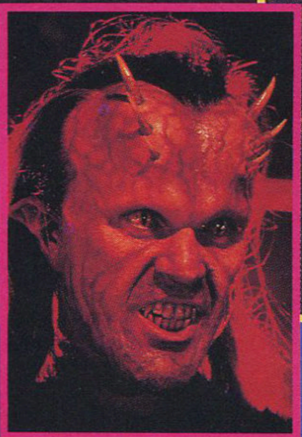
57 VIDEO WATCHDOG
Franco's "Faceless," fresh and (groan!) cut for video

63 CLASSIFIED MASSACRE

64 REVIEW: "DR. CALIGARI"
Expressionism, no more!

8

44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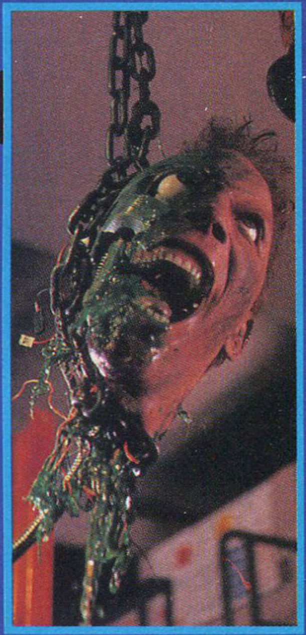
18

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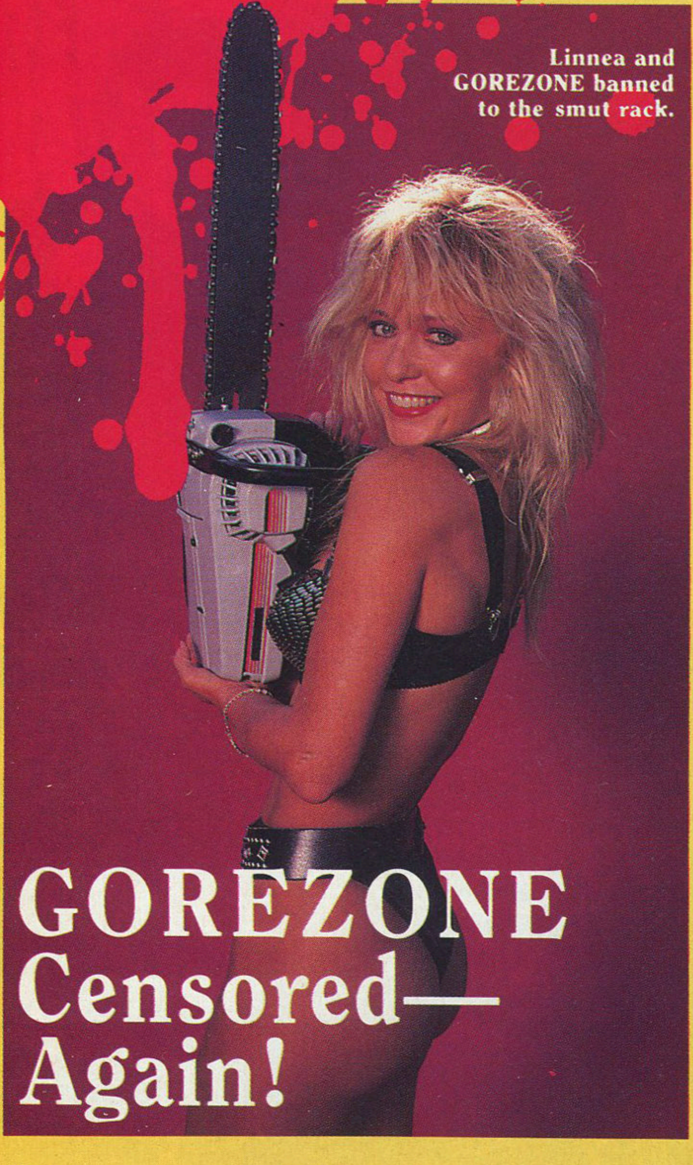
BLOOD FEST



Linnea and GOREZONE banned to the smut rack.

GOREZONE Censored—Again!

If you live in Ontario, Canada, GOREZONE might be a little harder to find on newsstand shelves these days. That's because in certain locations the magazine has been restricted to the smut rack and cannot be sold to those under 18. Let's start at the beginning of this current, most-disturbing example of the censorship battle GOREZONE continues to fight.

The trouble began last March when an Ontario businesswoman named Sue Ferguson walked into a local convenience store. Perusing the Hasty Market magazine stands, she pulled out a copy of GOREZONE #13, which was positioned next to comic books, surfing mags and other teen-interest publications. Well, the contents of GOREZONE failed to appeal to Ferguson. In short, she was appalled, disgusted and angry that young teens and preteens had easy access to GZ. So she complained, writing Neil Walker, president of the Hasty Market chain. Ferguson wrote: "GOREZONE ... is a disturbing publication in that it glorifies violence and sadistic behavior ... Kids are very impressionable between 8 and 14, and messages contained in this publication disturb me for the social lessons they contain."

Ferguson maintained that GOREZONE glorifies violence against her gender and demanded that the magazine be moved to the rack's top shelf, joining the ranks of *Big Breasted Babes*, *Sluts in Heat* and *Above the Thigh*. Hasty Market prez Neil Walker bowed down to the pressure and immediately complied with Ferguson's request, going so far as to send letters of his own. Walker contacted about 90 Ontario franchise store owners, telling them to either stop carrying GOREZONE or banish it to the sex magazine area. The kind fellow labeled GZ "junk" and "trash," while proclaiming that he's no censor.

In no time at all, the Ontario media caught onto the story. Editorials began popping up in local newspapers condemning GZ. The debate even hit the airwaves via the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, where I debated Ferguson on an afternoon radio show. Ferguson, who listens to Dead Kennedy records (!), insisted that the relocating of GOREZONE was not a form of censorship. I argued that it most certainly was; keeping a product out of the hands of its intended audience is de facto censorship. And what about the stores that refuse to carry porn mags? If GOREZONE is placed in the raincoat category, then those stores would most likely not want to sell us either. I also reiterated that GOREZONE is a positive magazine, that inspires kids to careers in makeup, film, writing and art. We encourage our audience to read, and emphasize that the films and videos we cover are all make-believe. It came as no surprise that Ferguson never read our publication before she called for the ban. And the issue of minors reading the mag? So what. There's nothing in GZ that's more frightening or "unhealthy" than the evening news or Mommy and Daddy fighting in the kitchen. A parent should monitor what their youngsters are buying, reading or renting, right? Should the government, corner newsstand or video store do the parenting for them? I say no.

So far, only about 14 Ontario stores have supported the GOREZONE ban. But this latest case illustrates what *one* demanding letter can accomplish. If you want to be able to buy GOREZONE at a Hasty Market in Canada, regardless of your age, you should write and complain too. Drop Neil Walker a nice letter and tell him why GOREZONE is a positive influence in your life, and why you have the right to purchase it where other youth-interest publications are displayed. Send your polite but persuasive letters to Mr. Neil Walker, President, Hasty Market Inc., 1491 Young Street, Suite 305, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4T 1Z4. Other proponents of free speech and those against censorship of any kind, no matter where you live, should write as well. Thanks for keeping GOREZONE alive.

—Anthony Timpone,
Editor

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GUT reactions

RISE AND BE COUNTED!

...I am not normally a letter writer, but after reading Chas. Balun's article "Blood-hating Freaks," I felt compelled to thank him. Never before have I read such a witty and factual article regarding the gall some people—namely the MPAA and NCTV—have in trying to regulate an artist's work. These people fail to realize that the truth shown daily on TV news is far more disturbing than any fictional horror flick. It all comes down to common sense: If it's not your cup of tea, then don't drink it. Remember, America is about freedom of choice. Isn't it?

Pete Weller
Interlaken, NJ

Photo: Copyright 1989 United Artists

"Well doc, I've been having a lot of chest pain lately. Right here."

...Since man first walked upon the Earth, violence has been a regular part of our daily existence and has become part of several of the more "innocent" aspects of our society. The Bible is filled with accounts of murders, the dead rising from graves, encounters with Lucifer and even a herd of demonically possessed pigs. The legend of St. Nicholas (the inspiration for our modern Santa Claus) contains a somewhat gruesome account of the saint performing miraculous resurrection of two young boys whose bodies had been dismembered by an evil innkeeper and salted down in barrels as meat for unsuspecting lodgers. (Shades of *Motel Hell!*)

Numerous psychologists and universities have conducted in-depth studies of the effects of violent media and literature on members of the public since the early 1960s. While studying for my major in Mass Communications, I had the opportunity to read the results of some of these studies. They all arrived at the same basic conclusion: There is NO—I repeat, NO—direct correlation between exposure to violent films and literature and rape, robbery, murder, "the decline of modern civilization" or the New York Yankees' continually crapping out near the end of the season. As Forrest J Ackerman once wrote in *Famous Monsters of Filmland*: If viewing horror films and reading horror novels can so totally corrupt a person's sense of decency and morality, Adolf Hitler must have seen and read *thousands*.

Lucian Tomes Jr.
1700 Tyler Parkway
Louisville, KY 40204

...Don't fret! I'm one horror fan who defends what he believes to be right. I've already written letters to WPIX-TV here in New York, which airs the terrific triad of *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Tales from the Darkside* and *Monsters*. They seem very receptive to what fans of these shows have to say. They do care. After all, we're the ones who keep them alive. My next effort is to write the MPAA. They *must* institute a new rating system for horror movies. We should not be deprived. To hell with those tight-ass snoots who believe that everything leaves "an impression" on our minds.

I am a physically disabled individual who has seen his rights violated many times. However, nothing goes unnoticed. I always have the last word by taking action. I'm temporarily relieving myself of my disability rights crusade to concentrate on this issue: For me, horror provides a much-needed escape from the injustices of our world.

I just wanted you to know that I'm on your side and always will be. I have subscriptions (which I continually renew) to all of your horror magazines and COMICS SCENE, too. Keep the contents of your horror mags as gory and frightening as ever. All the wimps and wimpettes better back off; I'm putting my wheelchair in second gear and vowing to leave "an impression" (tire tracks) on anyone who violates my love for the horror genre.

Anthony Trocchia
426 Graham Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11211-1416

BISSETTE BESET!

...Happy anniversary! GOREZONE #13 was great, bu what happened to the other posters? I hope you have more in the next issue. Reading Stephen R. Bissette's "Old Fears, New Fears," I chanced upon something that has been eating away at me for some time. In the article, Bissette makes the statement, "How can Pinhead be the new Freddy when he was stupidly snuffed in his first sequel?" If anyone else has noticed, the end of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* has a moving man walk into the room where a wooden post rises and shows the Cenobites being made. My friends thought the Cenobites were dead, but I had to enlighten them, as I hope to enlighten many readers.

Jason Czesnakowicz
10033 Linda Lane
Des Plaines, IL 60016

...In GOREZONE #13, the article by Stephen Bissette makes even more disturbing the big hand of the MPAA. Is Blockbuster Video really having new releases trimmed to fit their own twisted moral code? So, what you might be renting is less than what you saw on the screen and that was already rated R. I feel like a big dirty trick is being played on the public. We have the right to know, don't we? What can the caring public do? Who can we write to at Blockbuster?

I suggest that you print Jack Valenti's address in *every* issue of GOREZONE and FANGORIA. While you're at it, would you include the address of Blockbuster's home office in every issue? I believe people would like to question them regarding their tampering with an art form. Censorship of any kind worries millions of people like me.

John W. Hermanson
21 South Lane
Huntington, NY 11743

A source at Blockbuster wouldn't comment on individual cases, but told us that unrated tapes are screened by the company's buyers and given their own rating, then handled accordingly; if they decide it's an X equivalent, it's a no go. Look for more details in a future issue.

Art: Michael Valdez

GOREZONE GRANDSTANDED!

...What's with all of the horror-bashing going on in your magazine? I agree 100 percent with Petch Lucas's letter in GOREZONE #13. What is the point of giving films so much coverage and then tearing them apart in reviews? I agree that the horror genre is in sad shape, but continual reports about the declining quality of Freddy Krueger is not going to help matters any. Instead of printing articles about how bad things are in *Friday the 13th, Part VIII,* why not devote the five pages of space to new films like *Deliver Us From Evil* that seem to actually deserve some attention? You devote cover after cover, article after article to poor movies, and then you tell us how bad they are. We've seen them, we know. Why not tell us what's good and promising in the horror future instead of dwelling on the mistakes of the past?

Eric B. Markiewicz
Rochester, NY

"BLIND DEAD" BROUHAHA

...I would like to point out a mistake that appeared in "Master of the Blind Dead" in GOREZONE #13. On page 64, you state that Amando de Ossorio's *Las Garras de Lorelei* is not available on video; according to *The Encyclopedia of Horror Movies*, this 1972 movie has two alternate English titles, one of which is *When the Screaming Stops*. This movie is available from Lightning Video for $59.95. The movie's catalog number is LA9029. I own a copy of this tape, and the credits match those listed by *The Encyclopedia of Horror Movies* for *Las Garras de Lorelei*.

Bruce L. Luini
1017 North 14th Street
Allentown, PA 18102-1129

"HORROR SHOW" HYPED!

...I just viewed *The Horror Show* on video, and I honestly have to say that it's the best movie I've seen this year. Brion James and Lance Henriksen gave outstanding performances, and the FX were tremendous. The thing that impressed me most is that Max Jenke is unique. He's nothing like Freddy, Jason, Michael Myers or Pinhead. Once everyone catches on to this movie, I'm sure that it will be a cult favorite. Say, any news of plans for a sequel?

Tom Giddens
Cochran, GA

Well, you never know. After all, who expected Howling VI? *You might be interested to learn that* The Horror Show *began life as a sequel itself—yep, it was originally intended as* House III.

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PROFILE

"I think of the MPAA sitting, rubbing their hands together, waiting to pounce on this film and emasculate it."

How Joe Dante Survived

GREMLINS 2

THE NEW BATCH

By BILL WARREN

Joe Dante has one word for what induced him to do *Gremlins 2: The New Batch*—"Madness."

The shooting has stopped now, but harder work lies ahead—editing, recutting, scoring, color timing and generally beating the movie into a submissive state, at which point it will be flung out the open door of Warner Bros. to see if people pick up on it with happy little cries of joy or run over it with steamrollers.

Right now, though, Joe Dante relaxes in his office, joking with your correspondent, who has now interviewed the director at least eight times. "You could go home and write the interview without ever *talking* to me," Dante laughs, before gamely going on with the Official Chat.

It wasn't just madness, though, that led him and producer Mike Finnell to take on this giant task. It was big bucks *and* creative control. "After I had finished the first *Gremlins*, I thought the last picture I would ever be caught making"—an interesting phrase, that—"was the sequel. First of all, they never thought they would make a sequel, until it made all that money. And of course, when you make a lot of money, you want to make a sequel, whether you killed everybody off or not.

> **"If you're not careful with the kind of character Gizmo is, he looks like he just came off a shelf."**

"Over the years, Warner Bros. eventually took me at my word that I wasn't going to do it," he recounts. "They entertained a series of writers at a cost of untold thousands of dollars—maybe millions, for all I know—and nobody could lick it. They couldn't quite figure out a reason to make a sequel other than that the original made a lot of money." A legion of writers turned in outlines and

"There are a few things in *Gremlins 2* that are more violent than in the first, but there are fewer of them."

Grampa Al Lewis look-alike Robert Prosky gets his hair mussed.

even some finished scripts. Among the host of unknown laborers in the *Gremlins* vineyards were Todd Holland, Christian Matheson, Ed Solomon, Richard Outten, Steve DeJarnatt, Clifford & Ellen Green and Terry Jones.

Terry Jones? Of Monty Python fame? The one and the same, says Dante. In addition to a subway vigilante Gremlin, Jones' script had "a lot of funny stuff," Dante raves, including a colossal, apocalyptic finale that shocked Warner Bros. executives, who had a very proprietary feeling about their little reptilian monsters.

Anyway, Warners ran out of options, and sometime in 1988, they called Dante and Finnell in. "They basically told us, 'We haven't been able to put this together, and we really don't know what to do. If you will agree to make the movie, we will let you do whatever you want.'

"We said, 'Whatever we *want*?'" Dante quotes, in tones of childlike delight.

"They said, 'Whatever you want.'"

So Dante and Finnell began looking for writers. They had a vague idea that the story should be set in New York. To convince Rick Baker to do the FX, they had to promise him there would be new types of Gremlins. So a New York setting and new kinds of Gremlins were required—and though the budget was hefty, having Gremlins scampering around Manhattan was just too expensive, which meant a closed setting was needed.

"New York had always been festering in the back of our minds," Dante asserts. "It was an interesting milieu to tell the story in, because it was completely different from the first one. And the only way we could figure to do the picture was to make the second movie as different from the first one as it is from other horror movies."

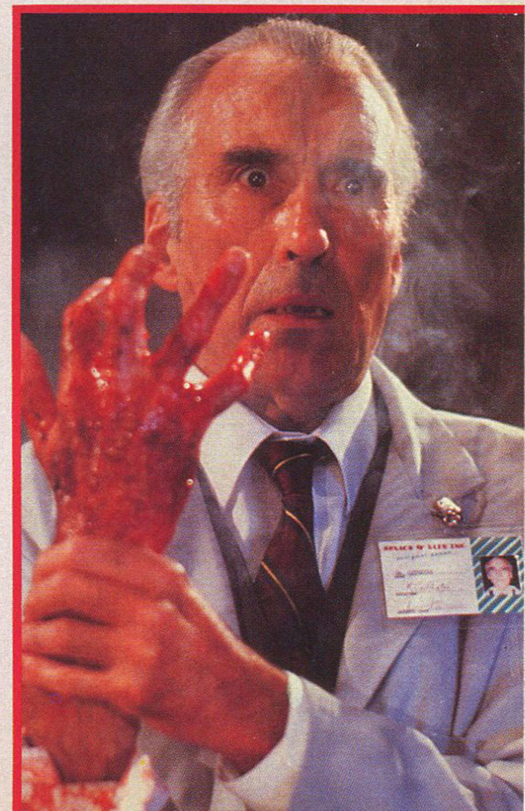
Charlie Haas, suggested to Dante by Jonathan Kaplan, came up with the idea of a "smart building" (one of those overly automated places where everything is run by computers) and with the idea of a gene-splicing lab to create new Gremlins.

"We went back to Warner Bros. with this idea," Dante grins. "Now, I don't know if it was because they liked the idea or because they were desperate to have *somebody* make this movie, but they said, 'Yeah, fine,' and gave us notes and stuff. We went through various different drafts of it, and eventually came up with something that was going to be pretty expensive and hard to make. The laws of sequelitis being what they are, the execs figure how much money they think is worth spending, vs. how much they think they're going to get back, and they decided to go ahead with it. Isn't that a boring story?"

Comparing Charlie Haas' script to Chris Columbus' for the first movie, Dante points out, "Not to take anything away from Chris Columbus' script, but it was written as a writing sample. It was never really intended to be filmed. It was one of those great Hollywood luck stories that Steven Spielberg happened to see this script and wanted to make it as a low-budget picture, which then became a big-budget picture. Charlie Haas' script to begin with was a stronger script, because Charlie is a funny New York-writer kind of guy [although he's from Oakland, California], and there's more color in the script than last time. And there's more opportunity, because you're dealing with a city instead of a small town, and you don't have to do hay-rube stuff."

Together, Dante, Finnell and Haas came up with ideas, which they kept track of on cards. "It's almost like storyboarding a car-

Here's an interesting set anecdote: Look what happened when someone accidentally spilled holy water on this unidentified extra.



toon,” Dante explains, “but instead of putting pictures up, you put up cards with words on them. Word boards, not picture boards. Charlie did an excellent job of taking disparate elements and a lot of dumb stuff that we wanted to have in the movie and fitted it all together in a somewhat coherent fashion that *seems* to make sense when you watch it. Although,” Dante adds after a moment, “it probably doesn’t stand up to *intense* scrutiny.”

Dante’s office is like the inside of his head, or at least how one might guess his memory to be. There are posters from his own movies neatly framed on the wall, but also posters from older movies, too. His shelves sag with scripts (produced and otherwise), toys (including some Billiken model kits; he painted that thing from *It Conquered the World* himself), and little heaps of correspondence and other papers.

Dante almost always wears the same kind of clothes: long-sleeved dress shirts (after knowing Dante for 14 years, I’ve never seen his forearms), often a clip-on tie, jeans and sneakers. He’s boyish in a positive way, ready to laugh and crack jokes. He’s a truly funny guy, and it’s not hard to see why actors like him so much. The secret is, of course, that Dante *likes* actors. “Listen,” he confides, “if you don’t like actors, I don’t think you should be in this business, because you can’t make a movie without them.”

On *Gremlins 2*, several new thespians were added to the We Will Work For Joe Dante Anytime Club, including Christopher Lee and John Glover. Of course, several of Dante’s favorites recur here. You would expect Dick Miller, who not only has worked on every movie Dante has made (even when ultimately cut out, as from *Amazon Women on the Moon*), but is back playing Mr. Futterman, the role he had in the first movie. Dante regular Robert Picardo returns as well.

Although *Gremlins 2* was a long shoot—“Empires rose and fell while I was making this movie!” Dante exclaims—it really wasn’t any harder than was expected. Having made the first movie, they knew what to anticipate, and it wasn’t even all that tiring. “We did the New York stuff first,” lists Dante, “and that was the hardest part. It was raining all day, but you can’t tell from the film. The sun would come out and then it would start raining. That didn’t help the plot, which required that it was *going* to rain but hadn’t started yet. Then we came here, and it was mostly done on stage; we built this gigantic, monstrous set that will take eight months to tear down.”

A movie as heavy on action and FX as *Gremlins 2* requires a great deal of storyboards, something Dante used to do for his movies himself. “Storyboarding in a picture like this is really very important,” he grimaces. “A lot of the visuals and gags come in at that point, as opposed to what’s in the script. The writer writes that things should happen; then you go to draw it, and very often you end up in a completely different direction than the words on the page. In *Gremlins 2*, we had to send all the storyboards to Charlie, and Charlie had to rewrite the scenes to fit the boards. I don’t know how many boards we had on this picture, but more than on any other. The first one didn’t have very many opticals, but now we’re trying to show the Gremlins full-length without having them stand in a corner or against the wall. That all involves blue screens and stuff.” And in the boards, placement of the matte lines can be indicated.

All this action means violence, to some. *Gremlins* caught some flack for being so “violent,” a reaction

Yep, the li’l critters still know how to entertain themselves.

Rick Baker returned for the sequel once he was assured he could create never-before-seen Gremlins.

Dante would never make a slasher flick—but a *flasher* flick, well...

that genuinely surprised Dante. "I didn't think, in an age of slasher movies, that it was that horrible," he argues. "There's no human blood in the movie. There is a lot of Gremlin blood, but the Gremlins were—after all, folks—rubber puppets. Your suspension of disbelief has gone to some extremes when you treat a Gremlin in a blender as if it were a cocker spaniel.

"I don't think *Gremlins 2* is as violent as the first picture, although it's easy for me to say,"

You think Zach Galligan is gonna save you, pal?

Photos: Copyright 1990 Warner Bros.

Like its predecessor, *Gremlins 2* plays on every human's fear of anything bad happening to Phoebe Cates.

he judges. "There are a few things in this picture that are more violent than in the first picture, but there are fewer of them. When you make the movie, you're very close to it, and the absurdity of it is much more apparent to you than to people simply taking two hours out of their lives, sitting down and saying, 'OK, tell me a story.' What I found gratifying about the first movie, given the clumsiness of the setup, the fairytale quality of the rules, all the stuff you have to swallow to enjoy that movie, is that people *were* willing to swallow it to be entertained. 'OK, OK, I'll buy that, just show me something.' It's a very hard thing to tell, and you can't until you see it with an audience."

Dante, need we add, enjoys scaring audiences, and watches for what he calls "ripple effects." "If you stand in the balcony and watch the audience, and something scary happens, you can see a ripple that goes through the audience from the front row to the back. I don't know how to translate this into MPAA lingo, because they invented PG-13 for *Gremlins* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.* I think of them sitting, rubbing their hands together, waiting to pounce on this film and emasculate it."

Dante really does view the mogwai and Gremlins as artificial creations. How else can he? On the set, he watches while they break down, while pieces of this Gremlin are removed and added to that one, while people trot by wearing football helmets with Gremlins mounted on top. "It's really hard to get inanimate objects and stuff to look semi-animate," he reports. "If you're not careful with the kind of character Gizmo is, he looks like he just came off a store shelf, especially if he's immobile. Rick Baker has done a remarkable job of giving personality to Gizmo, moreso than he had in the first movie, where he was just sort of cute."

Ultimately, though, Dante was as amazed as everyone else by the success of *Gremlins* and, one has the feeling, won't be surprised if *Gremlins 2* does a bellyflop. "Why did they like it? *I* don't know," he shrugs. "You make the movie for yourself, not for other people. You have to take people into account when you make the movie. You have to make sure they understand what you're doing, that you've expressed yourself correctly, but you don't go out and say, 'I'm going to make this movie for the 18-to-25 market' or 'people over 40' or 'handicapped ladies.' You make the thing you feel you want to make."

When Dante says that the most fun thing about *Gremlins 2: The New Batch* was "finishing it" and the least fun thing was "starting it," you get the feeling that he is more than joking. Making this movie has taken almost two years out of his life, with almost nine months of actual filming involved. He honestly doesn't know what's coming up next. "I want to do something that's not like this movie," he ventures. "I'd like to not do another big, expensive special effects movie, and of course that's all I've been offered. I would like to do another *'Burbs*-level movie—hopefully a better movie, but just something that has people in it and can be made at some pace that will not break my neck and will not take two years, and can stand on its own, and be fun to do, and exist on a character level."

But for now, there's the gigantic, elaborate *Gremlins 2*—the first sequel Joe Dante has ever made.

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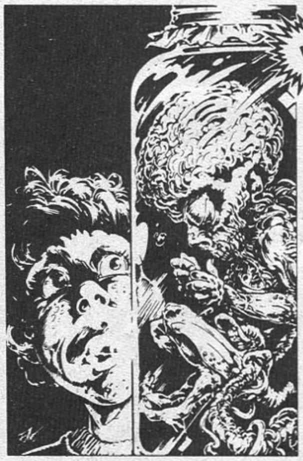

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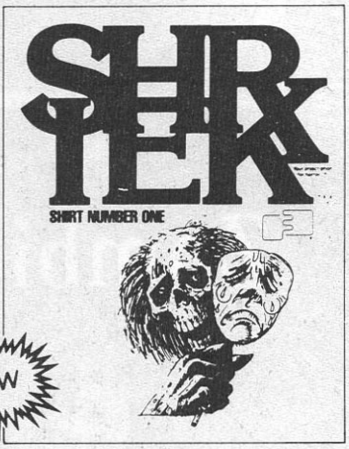

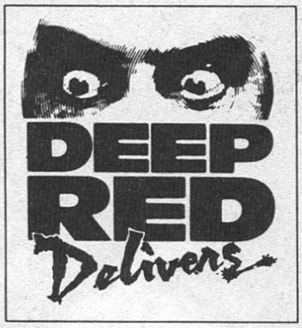

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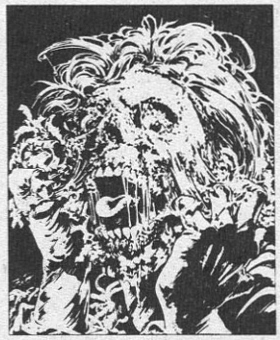

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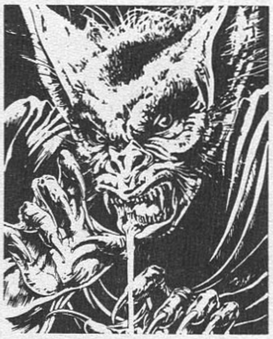

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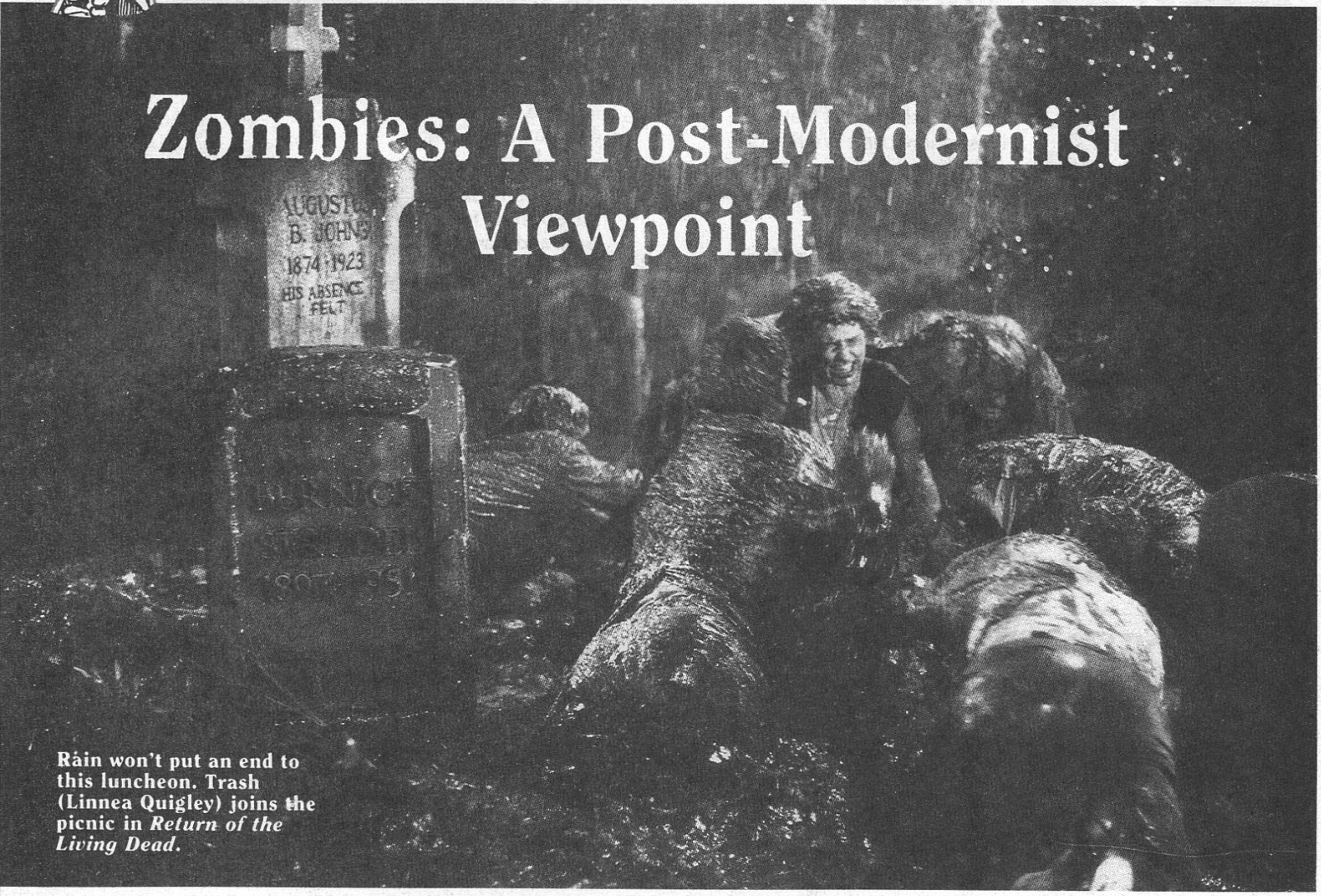
PIECE O'MIND

by Chas. Balun

Zombies: A Post-Modernist Viewpoint



Rain won't put an end to this luncheon. Trash (Linnea Quigley) joins the picnic in *Return of the Living Dead*.

Photo: Rory Flynn/Copyright Orion

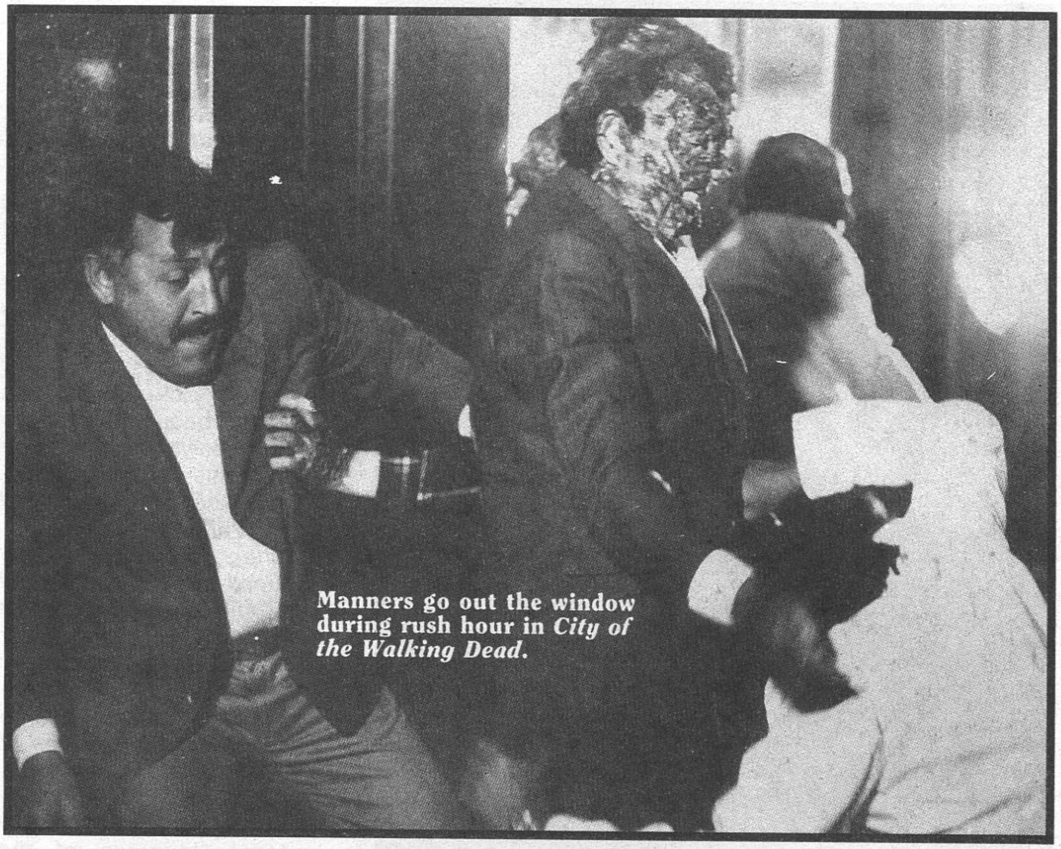
Blame it on Romero. When he opened those Pittsburgh crypts back in 1968, he changed the face of the modern zombie film forever. And if he hadn't succeeded in making three of the greatest walking dead pictures of all time, we probably would not have had to endure all the truly rotted cinematic putrescence that has followed in their wake. I mean, imagine a world without *Zombie Island Massacre*, *I Was a Teenage Zombie*, *Oasis of the Zombies* or *Zombie Lake*.

Though the living dead had long been a staple of the horror film, Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* broke down all the remaining barriers of the then-stagnant zombie subgenre. His *Night* was a visionary glimpse of societal apocalypse that transcended its humble beginnings. Early worm-churners such as *White Zombie* (1932), *The Walking Dead* ('36) and Val Lewton's sublime *I Walked With a Zombie* ('43) were among the first genre films to showcase the ethereal, otherworldly appeal of the freshly dead. While these and other films like *King of the Zombies* ('41), *The Crime of Doctor Crespi* ('35) and *Revolt of the Zombies* ('36) helped establish a beachhead for the dead, Romero's relentless, highly motivated troops from the tomb threatened to overrun all positions and bring the War of the Worms right into your living room. Romero's zombies were no longer just shuffling legions of faceless automatons, but rather friends, family and loved ones who had crossed the line and had now returned to seek *you* out, bite your lips off and gobble up your soft parts.

> **Romero's unmistakable influence blanketed the screen. He made being dead respectable again.**

With his very first foray into the genre, Romero had, indeed, succeeded in rewriting the Book of the Dead. With nearly every zombie film that was to follow, Romero's unmistakable influence blanketed the screen. He made being dead, well...respectable again.

After *Night of the Living Dead*, filmmakers were freed to experiment with various scenarios involving zombies from all walks of life and death. The rotted ones could



Manners go out the window during rush hour in *City of the Walking Dead*.

be young, old or in-between. They could be soldiers, bikers, rednecks, priests, virgins or vivisectionsists. They could walk *and* run, use tools, fly airplanes, ride horses, read books or play kick-ass rock 'n' roll. Zombies could now be reanimated using a plethora of both ancient and modern devices, including incantations, blood sacrifices, space probes, drugs, radiation, toxic waste, 10-inch spikes in the brain, nerve gas or infrasound waves.

At the same time, it also became much tougher to kill a wormface. The good ol' "shoot 'em in the brain" dictum issued during *Night of the Living Dead* was no longer 100 percent effective. Some highly focused, well-bred zombies were actually known to survive multiple gunshots, burnings, decapitations and total dismemberment. Those mausoleum doors kicked down back in '68 had indeed unleashed a new breed of zombie—fearless, crafty, versatile and pathologically bent on chronic violations committed upon both people and property.

In the '70s, zombies were hot, and they were all over the place, from graveyards to galleons, from battlefields to seashores. The dead came, they cannibalized and they conquered. Amando de Ossorio launched his epic, four-picture Templar saga with *Tombs of the Blind Dead*, while the team of Bob Clark and Alan Ormsby delivered *Deathdream* and *Children Shouldn't Play With Dead Things*. The decade was off and rotting.

Fledgling gorehounds were treated to several (then) shocking scenes of gut-noshing and breast-ripping in Jorge Grau's *Let Sleeping Corpses Lie* (a.k.a. *The Living Dead at the Manchester Morgue* or *Don't Open the Window),* all effectively engineered by Gianetto (*Zombie*) de Rossi, an FX man whose best work was just around the corner.

Nazi zombies made one of their first screen appearances in Ken Wiederhorn's (more on this guy later) *Shock Waves* in 1977, and were later inexplicably revived for loathsome yawnfests like *Zombie Lake* and *Oasis of the Zombies*.

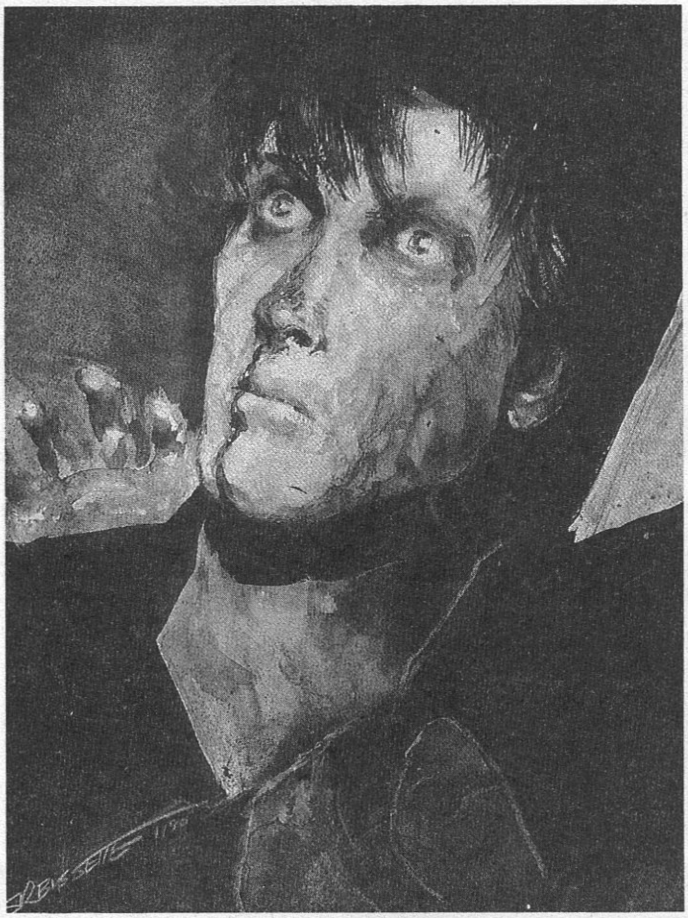
"And last, but not least, make sure you get the darn carpet clean," grouses Arthur Kennedy in *Don't Open the Window*.

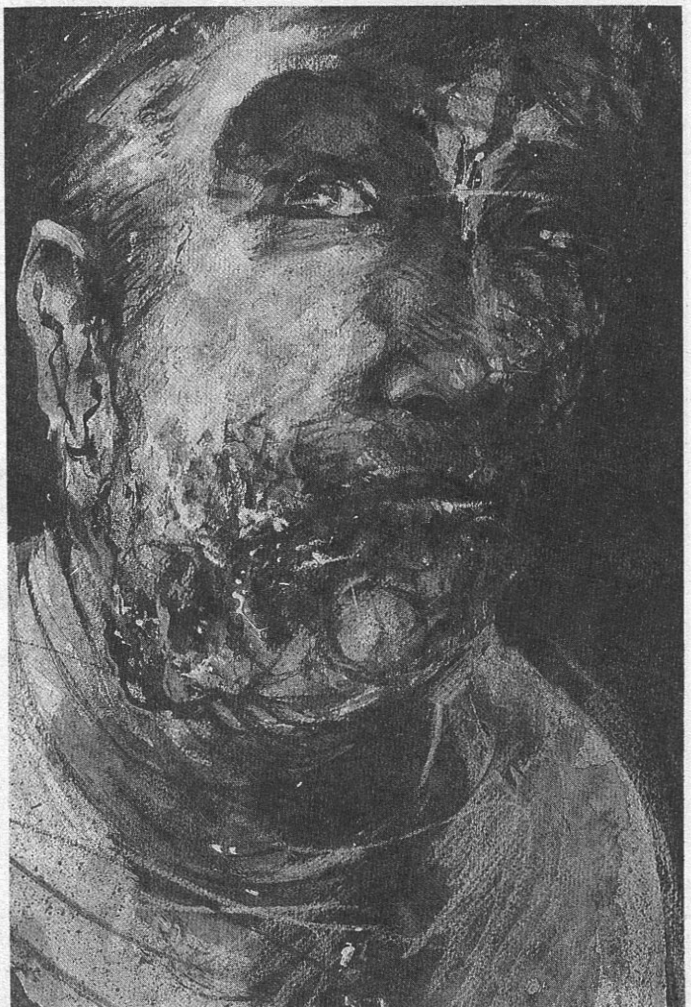
Photo: Courtesy John Cocchi

The decade climaxed with the King Kong of the cannibal zombie subgenre, Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*, a film that *everybody* tried to remake in the '80s. Though all of the Romero wannabes ultimately failed at their task, several near-misses still remain sentimental favorites in the hearts of many an unrepentant gorehound.

Lucio Fulci's *Zombie*, THE splinter-in-the-eye movie of this century, is usually near the top of that list, too. While it never matches Romero's grand vision, it nonetheless allows one a harmless wallow in things arterial and intestinal while providing a healthy outlet for the cannibal aggressions that haunt the soul of modern man.

Zombie's gore quotient was equalled in both *The Gates of Hell* and *The Beyond*, but neither film





Art: Copyright 1990 Steve Bissette

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While we're on the topic of *Night of the Living Dead*, check out FantaCo's eagerly awaited four-part graphic novel adaptation, which debuts this summer.

Adapted by Tom Skulan and Steve Bissette (who's also drawing the comic), *NOTLD* features scenes only hinted at in the original. Bet this whets your appetite for the new movie, huh?

achieved the notoriety that Fulci so easily commanded with his first dead effort. Many critics have assailed the Pasta Land zombie chunk-blowers for being cheap, brainless rip-offs of Romero's pictures, but this reviewer begs to differ. In fact, the only *real* gripe to be aired in this column concerning marginal films like *City of the Walking Dead*, *Dr. Butcher, M.D.*, or even the frequently shat-upon *Night of the Zombies* is that these few films used up all the really cool titles as they made their way from one country to another. *Dr. Butcher* became *Zombie Holocaust*, *Queen of the Cannibals* or *Island of the Last Zombies*; Umberto (*Make Them Die Slowly*) Lenzi's *City* became *Invasion of the Atomic Zombies*; and Bruno Mattei's schlockfest *Night of the Zombies* was known in various quarters as *Hell of the Living Dead*, *Zombie Creeping Flesh* and *Cannibal Virus*. Yow! They shoulda saved a couple of those for later.

Dr. Butcher M.D., by whatever name you wish to call it, still manages to satisfy the closet connoisseur by featuring *both* staples of the Italian exploitation cycle—cannibals *and* zombies—in the same picture. Now, that's a bargain in any man's language.

The Italians, however, employ a strange and unexplainable numerical system to their films that is just as confusing as the multiple title syndrome. Andrea Bianchi's frisky *Burial Ground*, filled with hyperactive, resourceful, tool-wielding zombies, metamorphosed into *Zombie 3: Nights of Terror* a good 5 years before Lucio Fulci and Bruno Mattei completed their version of *Zombie 3*.

Soon even the hardcore Euro-zombie fan tired of all the repetition and slavish imitations of stateside product and began demanding that the mobile dead do a little something more than merely scarf a lot of meat-on-the-hoof. Well, the indefatigable Joe D'Amato, fast food horror king of the continent (*Trap Them and Kill Them*, *Buried Alive*, *Grim Reaper*, about 600 others), smirkingly obliged these twisted masses by introducing horny zombies with raging libidos in his porno potboiler *The Erotic Nights of the Living Dead*. The less thought about this concept, the better, methinks.

Other overseas filmmakers diddled a bit further with the zombie concept and came up with *Dawn of the Mummy*, a strange Italian/Egyptian/American co-production featuring 5,000 year-old ragheads resurrected when a bunch of snot-nosed fashion freaks desecrate a royal tomb during a photo shoot. And predictably, even though the zombies *look* a little different, what could be first on the agenda after a 50-century snooze? Yep, rush on into town for a quick bite. New meaning is given the term "wedding feast" in this film as the mummy zombies crash a marriage ceremony and proceed to eat the bride. Rude and unconscionable behavior, to be sure, but hey: "They're dead, they're all messed up."

If you can accept the fact that a 5,000-year-old mummy still has an appetite (let alone a stomach), then you'll probably fall right under the spell of Horace Menga's riotous and jaw-dripping Asian oddity, *Revenge of the Zombies* (a.k.a. *Black Magic 2*, 1981). They don't come much nuttier than this pup. An evil sorcerer, who drinks human milk laced with freshly shaved pubic hair, controls an army of zombies by pounding 10-inch spikes through their heads. He also slices his tongue with a big knife and spits blood on them when he wants them to kick into overdrive. Then the

Photo: Troma

The rarest of headaches are those that bleed.

movie starts to get *really* weird.

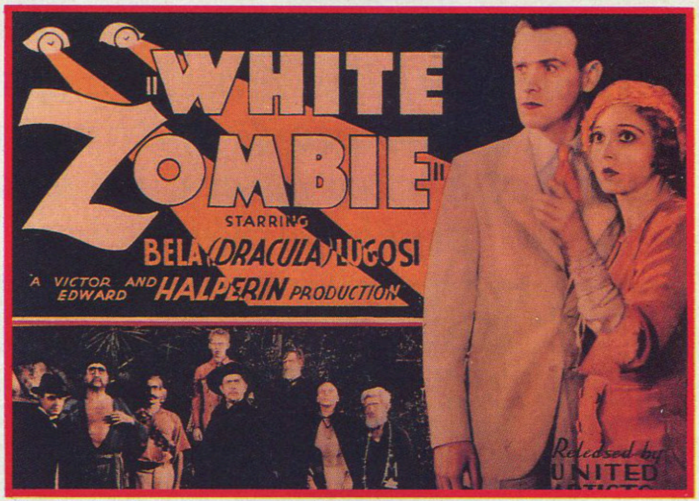
Once again, it was up to George Romero to set the record straight and bring some order back to the genre before things got *totally* out of hand. In fact, three of the most significant zombie films of the decade appeared nearly simultaneously: *Day of the Dead*, *Return of the Living Dead* and *Re-Animator*. Yes, it was a *very* good year. Each film helped redefine and reshape our perceptions of just what a zombie was capable of. Now the dead could talk, read, reason, shave, operate police radios and *remember* those who had insulted them. They could survive decapitations, bodily bisections and gunfire. They developed a taste for music, brains and modern culture.

Things looked pretty promising there for a while. It seemed like there was still a lot of life left in the dead. And then Ken (*Shock Waves*) Wiederhorn effectively pulled the plug on the works with a terribly unfunny, insulting sequel to *Return of the Living Dead.* Zombie fans are still fuming over that one.

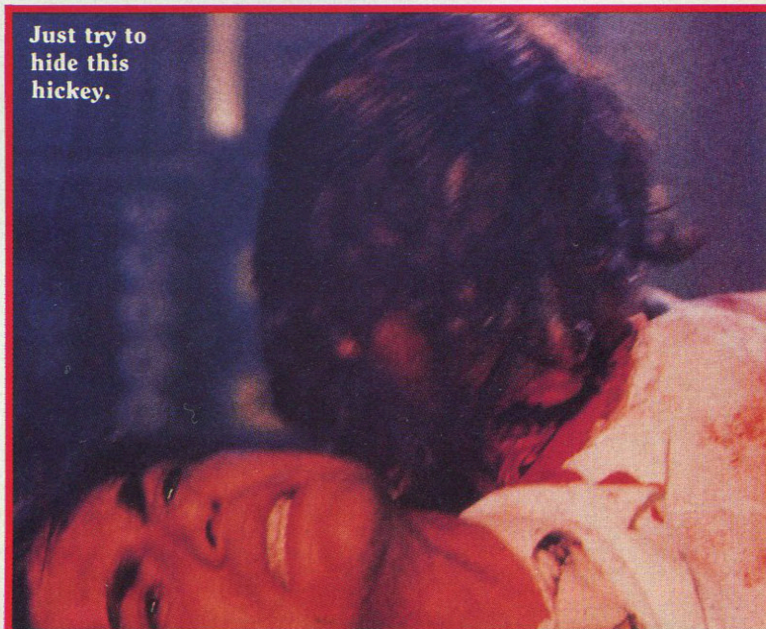
For some time after that debacle, it began to appear that there were just as many zombies cavorting behind the cameras as in front of them. Certainly must've been the case with *Zombie Island Massacre*. Would it be impolite to suggest that the makers of this deadless mess eat ca-ca and die? Ditto for *Zombie High*, *I Was a Zombie for the FBI* and any other film released to videocassette in one of those garishly airbrushed, oversized boxes peppered with blatant lies about content and displaying credits that read right out of the Thesaurus of Pseudonyms.

Not to worry, though, the last 20 years have once again proven the zombie to be a most resilient character. They're still *everywhere*—in the shopping malls, behind corporate desks, in politics and post offices, convenience stores and service stations. They take your tickets at the movies and give you a number at your local DMV. A few even produce and star in their very own TV shows. They're not just walking the earth anymore, they're *running* it.

And somewhere back in Pittsburgh, George A. Romero is smiling.



You'd think at least one *White Zombie* would have picked up a tan from always hanging out in the jungle.

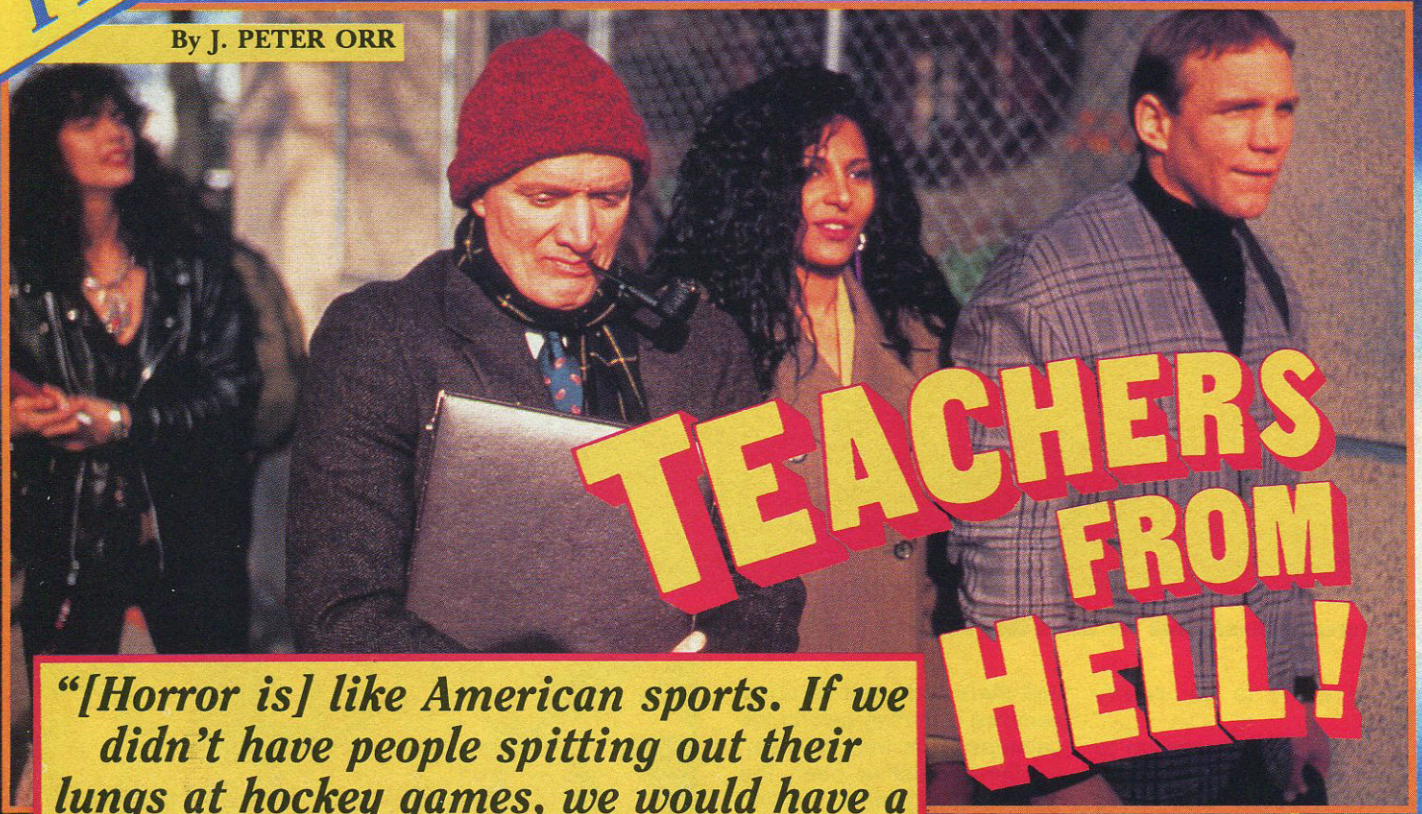


Just try to hide this hickey.

PROFILE

CLASS OF 1999

By J. PETER ORR



TEACHERS FROM HELL!

> ***"[Horror is] like American sports. If we didn't have people spitting out their lungs at hockey games, we would have a psychopathic society."***

It is cold in the abandoned halls of Seattle's Lincoln High, so *Class of 1999*'s cast and crew huddle in the few heated rooms, dreading the walkie-talkie commands that will force them out into the chilly corridors. Here in the lounge that until a few days ago served as office to Malcolm McDowell's principal Miles Langford, young members of the mostly youthful gang ensemble sip coffee, do crossword puzzles and trade shop talk.

The topic just this moment is the danger of being stereotyped—specifically, stereotyped as a "horror" actor. Oh, the terrors of it, the irreparable damage to one's career, the shame of being identified with "those" movies.

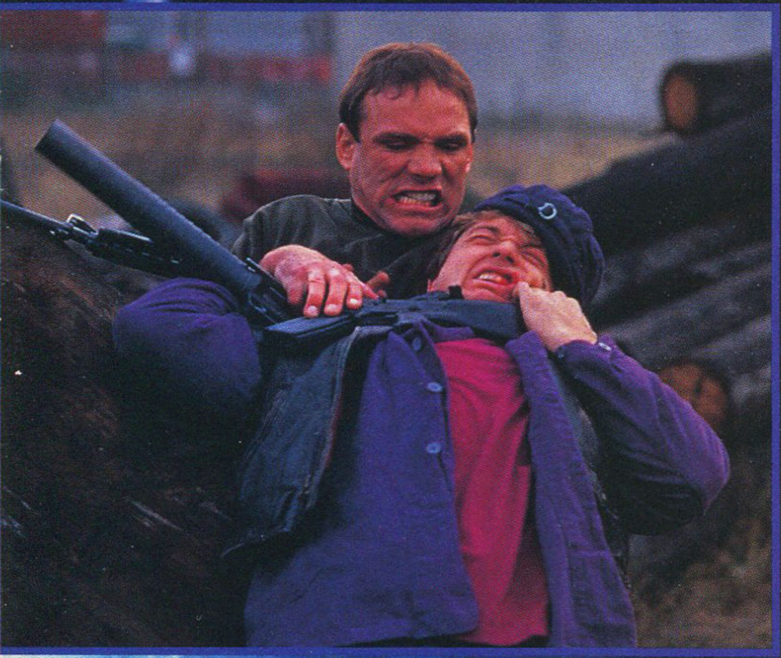
Sitting off to one side, with a large prosthetic robot arm attached to one shoulder and a newspaper opened in his lap, one older actor quietly dismisses the conversation he has just overheard. Considering that this veteran thespian has been making movies regularly since before many of these youngsters were born, one might be tempted to trust John P. Ryan's judgment.

"For one thing," Ryan intones between gulps of java, "you can't control that. I just take the position that whatever unfolds, so be it, you know? I wouldn't take the route of wanting or denying or championing or even judging it. Once you've been in the business awhile, you learn to let it go and see what happens. Too much of it is just chance."

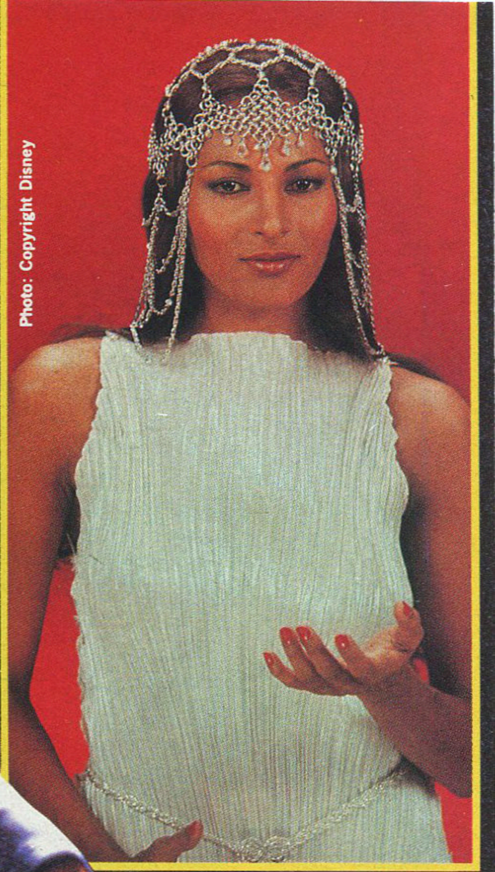
Ryan knows what he's talking about, having learned it first-hand since his sharing his screen debut with fellow unknown Dustin Hoffman in 1967's kidnapping comedy *The Tiger Makes Out.*

"When I first started doing this, people used to talk about getting typecast because of gangster pictures," he reminisces. "Had I concerned myself with that stuff, I might have missed out on some terrific films, like *Dillinger*, which John Milius wrote and directed. This was just before Francis Coppola made gangster movies more respectable [Ryan later worked for Coppola on *The Cotton Club*]. Around that time, I also did a terrific picture with Cliff Gorman and Joe Bologna called *Cops and Robbers*, and I played a Mafia character. It was a tremendous movie, even though it didn't do too well."

Class of 1999, sequel to director Mark Lester's *Class of 1984*, has Ryan embroiled in a violent crime/school fantasy. Rather than picking up where the first film ended (which would have been difficult, since almost all the juvenile hooligans died in the climax), the new film posits a grim

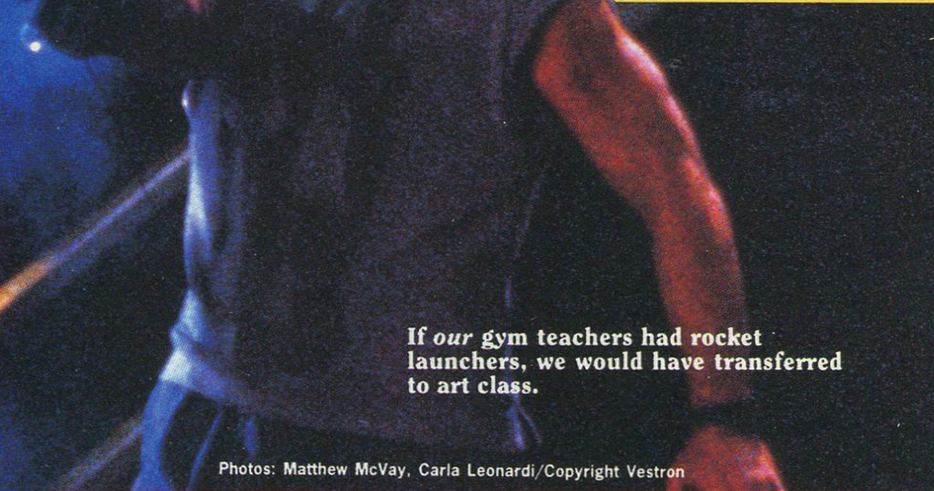


You go into battle dressed in violet and magenta, this is what you get.



Pam Grier (as the Most Beautiful Woman in the World, needless to add) provided the only interesting moments in Disney's dull *Something Wicked This Way Comes*.

Photo: Copyright Disney



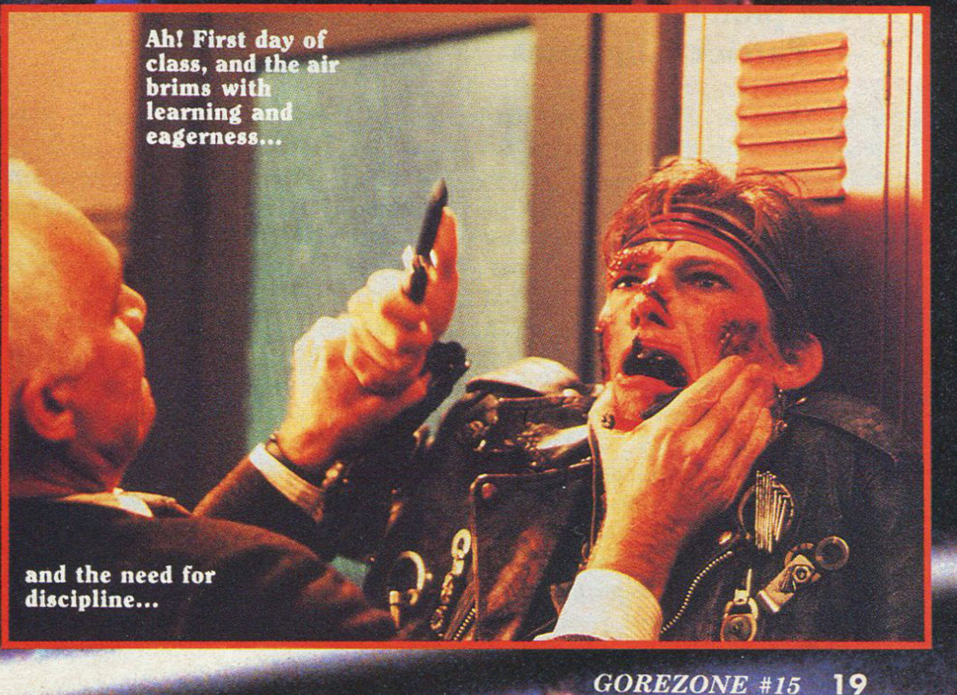
If *our* gym teachers had rocket launchers, we would have transferred to art class.

Photos: Matthew McVay, Carla Leonardi/Copyright Vestron

> **"Horror is a great medium. If it's done with skill and forcefulness, it's as good as film gets."**
> **— John P. Ryan**

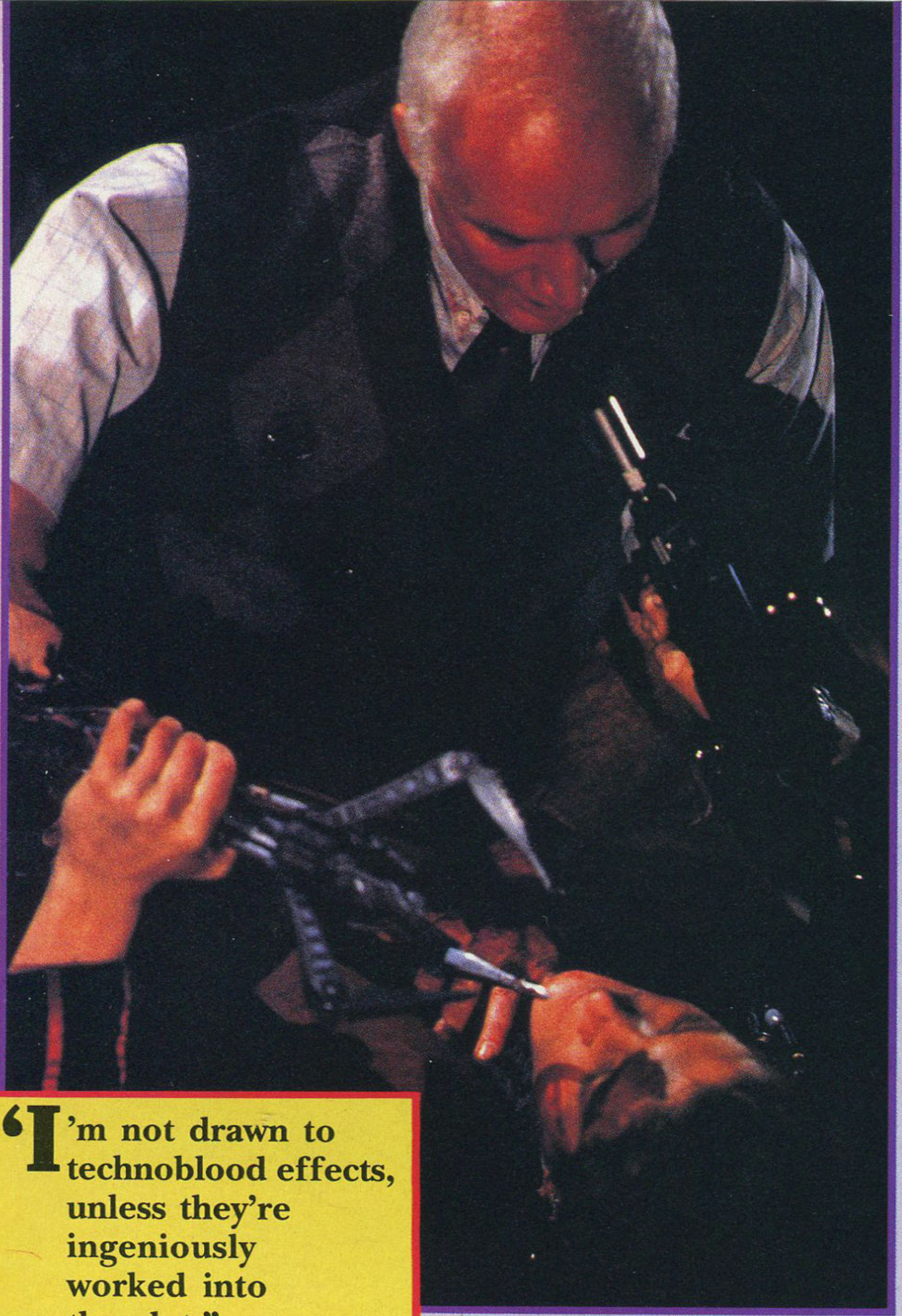
future extrapolated from today's headlines. Exasperated at the uncontrollable growth of gang activity in America's high schools, the government creates the Department of Educational Defense. This bureau's head, played by Stacy Keach, chooses Langford's school to test his newest brainchild: the introduction of modified military androids disguised as teachers.

"Between the images of drug addiction, which is a major concern not only in America but in the world community now, and the school process where students have lost interest in the learning experience because of the world's increasing hopelessness, it seemed to me that this was a movie with something to say," explains Ryan of his decision to join the cast. "Particularly since it's working from a genre that mimics some kind of fantastical projec-



Ah! First day of class, and the air brims with learning and eagerness...

and the need for discipline...



Cody Culp (Bradley Gregg) prepares to introduce Mr. Hardin (John P. Ryan) to history.

> **"I'm not drawn to technoblood effects, unless they're ingeniously worked into the plot."**
> **— Patrick Kilpatrick**

tion of how we might be at the turn of the century, if we keep accelerating at the rate we're accelerating now. From that point of view, this is a very contemporary project."

Interestingly, this does not mark Ryan's maiden voyage in a robotics-based sequel; that honor goes to *Futureworld*, the Peter Fonda vehicle that followed up *Westworld*. Don't feel bad if you can't recall much about the picture; neither can Ryan. "Geez, that goes back so long ago that I can't even remember it," he laughs. "I couldn't give you a comment on it. It feels like a thousand years ago. You know, some memories stay vivid, others just...I guess nothing really unpleasant happened on that production, so it doesn't stick in my mind."

Ryan's familiar face has turned up in countless action films like *Runaway Train*, *Fatal Beauty* and *Death Wish 4*. The actor's place in the hearts and minds of monster devotees was earned by Larry Cohen's quintessential killer baby epic *It's Alive!* Ryan played the disgusted dad of a mutant infant that rips up Los Angeles. "*It's Alive!* was different from other monster stories in one way," Ryan muses. "With Dr. Frankenstein and all the versions of that character, you never have a reconciliation between the monster and the monstermaker. In *It's Alive!*, not only does he who made the monster spare it, but he owns up to creating it, and they reconcile."

The assignment meant enough to Ryan that he reprised his role for *It Lives Again* three years later. "Larry Cohen's enterprising, consuming and ambitious," Ryan praises. "He gets a lot of mileage out of his art." Despite this, Ryan was not coaxed back for a third shot on *It's Alive III: Island of the Alive*. "Enough's enough," Ryan grumbles good-naturedly.

"Horror is a great medium," he concludes. "If it's done with skill and forcefulness, it's as good as film gets. It represents denied or disowned or unacknowledged darkness. That's where nightmares come out, that's where monsters are born. It's fabulous to touch things subliminally in the subconscious, things that have always been there. In a funny way, it's like American sports. If we didn't have people out there spitting their lungs out at football and hockey games, we would have a psychopathic society. It releases a lot of pent-up emotions, all kinds of feelings, and it puts people in touch with things they weren't aware of themselves."

To tell you the truth," shrugs fellow automaton teacher Patrick Kilpatrick, as he closes his paperback and lays it amidst the collected mechanical trinkets on a nearby table, "my first experience with robotics has been great. From the start, I was very impressed with special effects supervisor Eric Allard's shop. I used to write advertising, and his workplace was very much like an ad agency. They had many rooms devoted to making clients comfortable, and there was all this computer material. I didn't expect to enjoy it as much as I did."

The script has Kilpatrick, as gym teacher Mr. Bryles, disciplining students via a missile launcher concealed in his forearm. Consequently, the towering but soft-spoken actor is contending with prosthetic and mechanical appliances. "Naturally, it's not the most comfortable thing in the world, wearing braces and harnesses and extra appendages," he allows. "It's similar to doing a period piece in armor. If the shots work out, then it's worth it. Had I my druthers, I would just act in regular clothes all the time, but the movies don't work that way."

Of the three actors portraying lethal cyborgs, Kilpatrick is the relative newcomer, partly because he switched to acting after already establishing himself as a journalist with such high-profile credits as *Time*, *Interview* and *Playboy* on his resume. Since landing his first featured role in Nicholas Roeg's *Insignificance* ("I was so pleased to work with Roeg, especially since he directed *Don't Look Now*, a brilliant, scary movie with no effects whatsoever," Kilpatrick beams), he has amassed a cornucopia of genre-related roles.

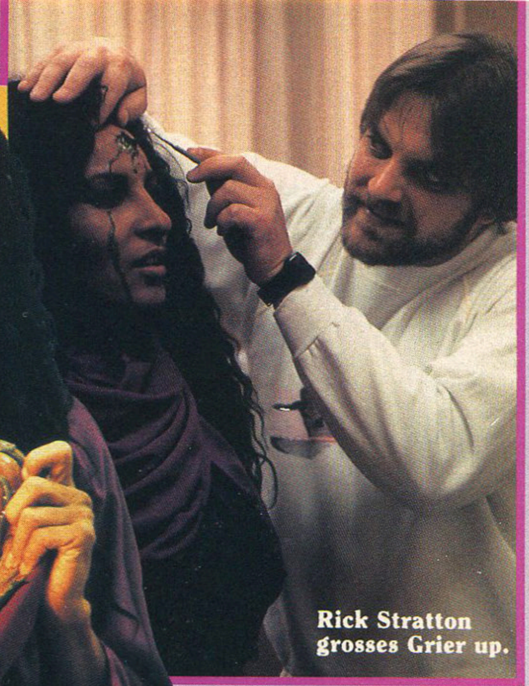
Chief among these was a starring turn in *The Cellar* (GOREZONE #7), which Kevin (*Witchboard*) Tenney took over from a previous director after shooting had commenced. Not surprisingly, all involved have been guarded in their appraisals. "It's a horror film with no horror," Kilpatrick ventures. "It devoted quite a bit of time to examining a father-son relationship, which is something not every horror film does. Ambitious, you might call it."

Other assignments include *Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins*, *Russkies*, *The Presidio* and numerous television parts. *Class* will mark the first time his character gets run over by a bus, however. With highbrow wings like *American Playhouse* on his heels, Kilpatrick might be expected to frown on such shenanigans.

"Not at all," he shakes his head. "For me, the criterion is the script. Every category has produced great films, so you can't view it through a blanket condemnation. That said, I'm not drawn to technoblood effects, unless they're ingeniously worked into the plot. I just don't think it's necessary in order to tell a powerful story.

"What attracted me to this project was a certain degree of wit in the script, which was still being written when I had to commit," Kilpatrick continues. "When I choose a job, I have to feel out the direction it's moving in. There's just no way to guess the finished product. And I was the first one cast for this, because they had to build all these effects and robotics around me. At any juncture up to the commencement of shooting, so many variables can wreck a production. Luckily, meeting Eric Allard and seeing all the good work his company All-Effects has done set my mind at ease. Judging from the way Mark Lester covers so much and the caliber of the cast, I'd be surprised if this *didn't* turn out well."

Hey, a woman this fine *couldn't* be for real!



Rick Stratton grosses Grier up.

FX Photos: Courtesy Rick Stratton

Far away across the building, seated within the comfortable confines of the wardrobe room, bona fide cult figure Pam Grier takes a few moments from her break to reflect on the unfortunate relevancy of *Class of 1999*'s corrupt future.

"The drug epidemic is so overwhelming," she shudders. "Used to be that drugs were for people who were impoverished. What do all these middle class people have to escape? I can understand wanting to take a rollercoaster ride, but please, go to an amusement park. You'll save your money *and* your health."

Don't get the idea that the star of *Coffey* and *Sheba Baby* picked *Class of 1999* for its didactic value, though. "There's no point in making preachy movies, mostly because what's in the script when you sign on is hardly ever what's onscreen when it's over," she elaborates. "Besides, I don't think anybody acts in film for the art, unless they're working for Scorsese, you know? If I was De Niro coming off *Raging Bull*, maybe I'd give you some rap about art and concept.

"Film and television is the bulk of my work," Grier continues. "I get my personal fulfillment from theater; plays are where you can take chances and really work with the moment. Movies and TV just aren't like that."

With a 20-year career spanning from early blaxploitation classics to big-budget contemporary films like the Gene Hackman thriller *The Package*, and scores of primetime TV episodes of top-rated series (*Night Court* and *Miami Vice*, among others), Grier speaks from experience. Along the way, she has garnered a great deal of attention from both horror and action fans. For personal reasons, however, she prefers not to discuss the lion's share of her genre work.

"It's not that I'm unhappy with these films," she stipulates. "When I take a job, I look at the people involved, make sure they're all dedicated to their gigs. I hate to put down something because ev-

(continued on page 61)

PROFILE

Photo: Courtesy Steve Johnson

MAGIC JOHNSON

"I still love what I'm doing, it's just that I can't see myself at age 40 making rubber monsters."

By MARC SHAPIRO

Steve Johnson chalks up yet another triumphant creation with his unique Rachel demon.

Steve Johnson has been his own boss for quite a while now. He likes that. The makeup FX veteran has graduated from dues-paying efforts like *Night of the Demons* and *Dead Heat* to such big-budget mainstream films as *The Abyss* and *The Guardian*. He likes that, too.

So is the man satisfied? Well...

"That's a hard question to answer," reflects Johnson during a rare free moment in his Southern California shop. "I don't think that, at this point, I would ever be happy working for somebody else again. I've gotten to the stage where I want more control, and I definitely see myself moving slowly in the direction of becoming a producer/director. Don't get me wrong—I still love what I'm doing, it's just that I can't see myself at age 40 making rubber monsters."

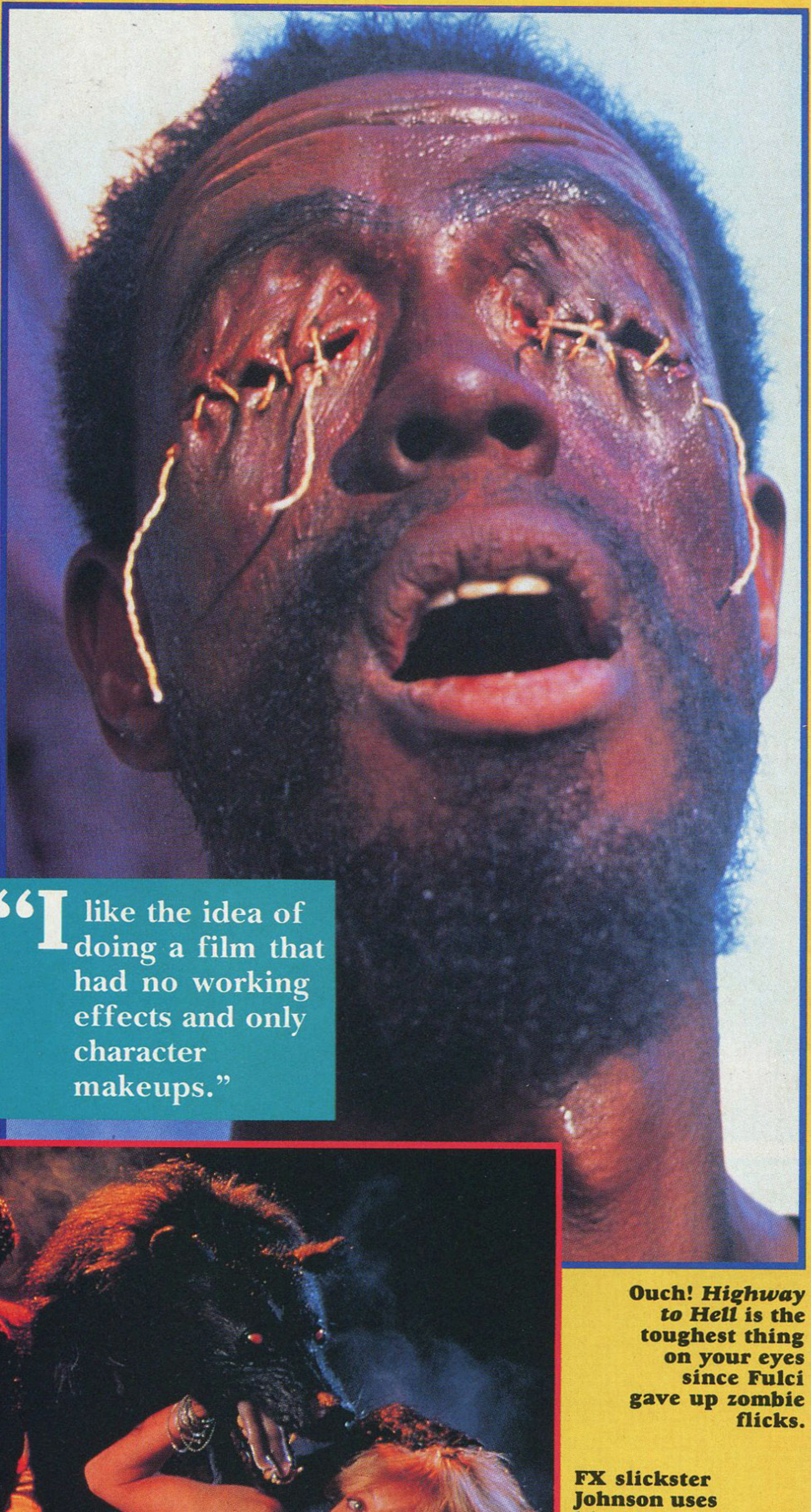
Johnson (who recently tied the knot with longtime screen squeeze Linnea Quigley) made rubber monsters and a whole lot more on the recently completed *Highway to Hell* (Fango #93). He claims that much of his *Highway to Hell* duty consisted of standard stuff: out-of-kit makeups, teeth, contact lenses and wigs. Still, there was much to challenge his talents.

"It was primarily makeup and nonmechanical effects, which were fun," he reports. "I also thought the designs of the main characters were good. But the main thing was that I was given total control." Johnson's contributions consisted of a monster suit done comically with sagging teats and bloated belly, several Andy Warhol clones, a striking image of a zombie cop handcuffed through his eye sockets, and what Johnson considers the film's highpoint: the demonic patrolman from hell, the bad guy in blue called Hellcop.

"I had to keep Freddy out of my mind when I was creating Hellcop's makeup," Johnson reveals. "Hellcop is the lead villain, and he's scarred, and so is Freddy. The similarity is obviously there. As hard as I tried to keep Freddy out of my mind, it is obviously very Freddylike."

Johnson feels that the Rachel demon suit works so well by virtue of its simplicity. "It's really a simple, standard suit," he insists. "On the surface, there's nothing really cool or innovative about it; it's just a man in a suit. But what makes this suit really cool to me is that the normal things have been tweaked just a little bit. We gave the hands three fingers instead of five, and the feet are shaped like hooves. We also built special metal braces into the feet of the costume, so that the person inside it walks on the balls of his feet and thus restructures the entire look of the lower leg.

"The rest was just a real skin-tight suit," he continues. "The breasts are weighted, so they bounce around. We used different



"I like the idea of doing a film that had no working effects and only character makeups."

Hell Photos: Jon Gardey/Copyright Hemdale

Ouch! *Highway to Hell* is the toughest thing on your eyes since Fulci gave up zombie flicks.

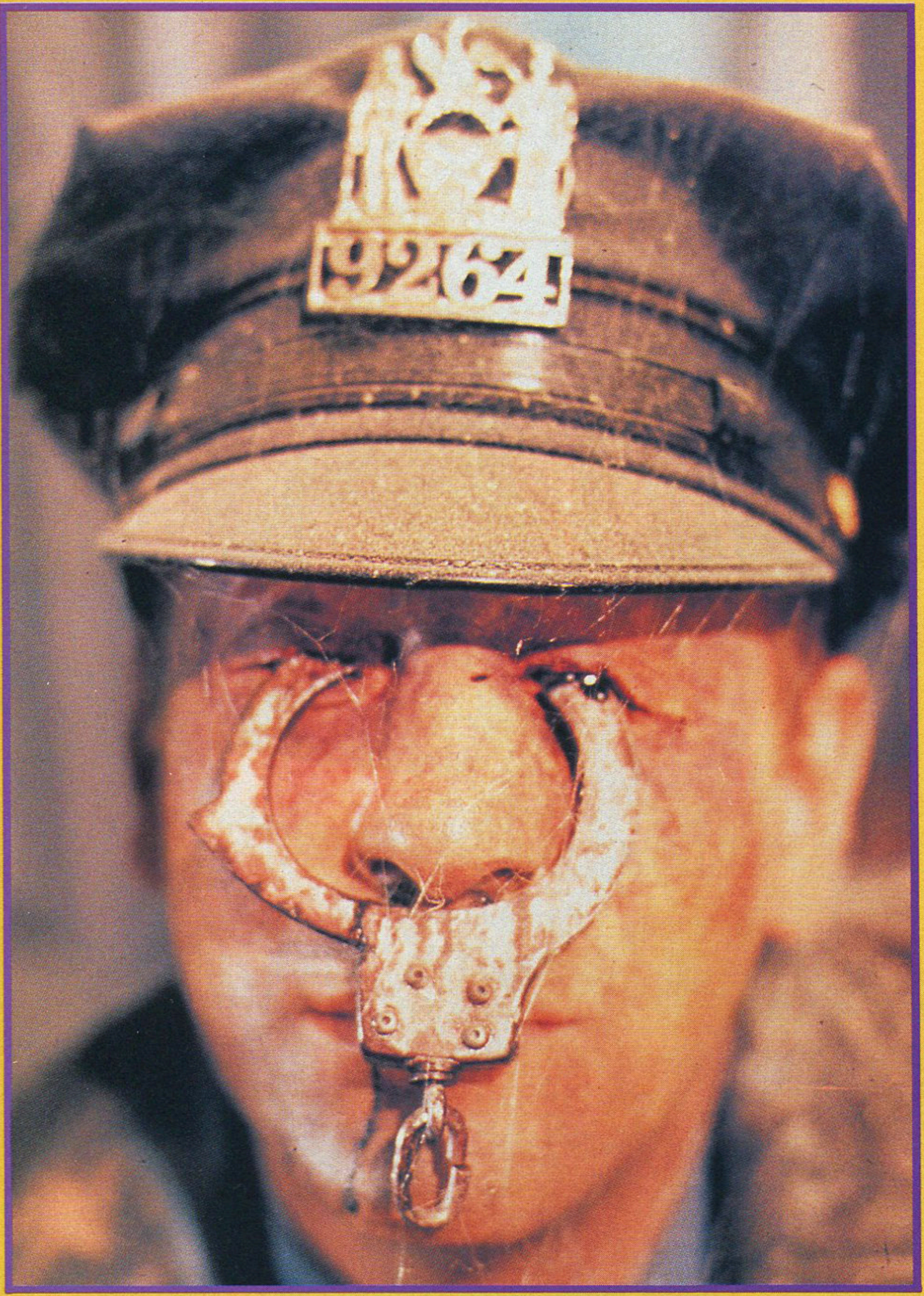
FX slickster Johnson uses his *Guardian* wolf puppet to impress some girl. (C'mon, you know who she is!)

Photo: Courtesy Steve Johnson

rigs to show the tail, moved with a simple monofilament line, as a living thing."

Johnson's "easy is best" approach continued in his devil design and the most striking member of the patrolmen in the doughnut shop sequence. "The cop who is handcuffed through the eyesockets was [assistant] Dave Barton's idea," Johnson credits. "Again, it was simple. We put an appliance over the actor's eyes and attached cutaway handcuffs so that it gave the appearance of being locked through the sockets.

"My initial idea for the devil was to do a *very* old old-age makeup with fangs and long blonde hair," he adds. "There were some script changes that indicated a typical, more powerful look. I fell back on a lot of 45-degree makeup angles that resembled things I've done before, but many people have said it looks real original. The designs were strong. I liked the idea of doing a film that had no working effects and only character makeups."

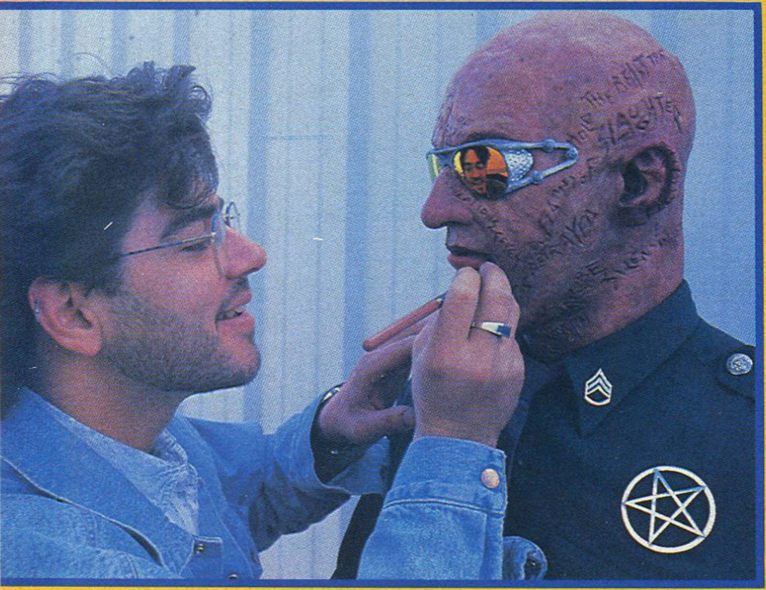


In all, Johnson's work found favor with those connected with the film. "Steve was amazing!" raves *Highway* co-producer Mary Anne Page. "He's an incredibly imaginative, detailed person who shows great patience."

Johnson was also an active participant in the soon-to-be-released *Deliver Us From Evil* (a.k.a. *Night Angel*), handling all the major FX during principal photography. "I did the snake-lady makeup on the main character and a couple of snake puppets," recalls Johnson. "I also did this really bizarre hell scene with a bunch of strange characters. There was this one guy with a second mouth on his neck that we sculpted onto an appliance. We did a built-up chest for a scene where the creature in the film digs her fingers into a victim's chest and pulls out the heart, and a sequence in which a person's hands are chopped off. We did a lot of gore effects. How much of it actually makes the final cut is anybody's guess."

In between low-to-moderate film adventures such as *Dead Heat* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master*, Johnson also tackled

The temptation to come up with a smug caption is really great here, especially since several of us have gotten parking tickets lately.



A little dab will do Hellcop (C.J. Graham).

television with FX assignments for three episodes of *Monsters*, an experience he ranks as the most fun-filled of his career.

"The best thing about doing *Monsters* was that the pressure of a big production wasn't there," he grins. "There weren't hundreds of thousands of dollars resting on my shoulders. *Monsters* is cheesy, '50s pulp stuff."

This fact came to life when Johnson set about creating an attacking amoeba for the episode "Micro Mites." "It was made out of a weather balloon, a totally shitty monster," roars Johnson. "It was as interesting as I could make it in the short amount of time you have on those shows, but the first time I went on the set with this thing, I really felt terrible. Then I looked around at what was going on and thought, 'Well, we've got shitty sets, acting and a script.' No offense to anybody; that's just the way the shows are done. And I realized that if I had done something state-of-the-art, it wouldn't have fit."

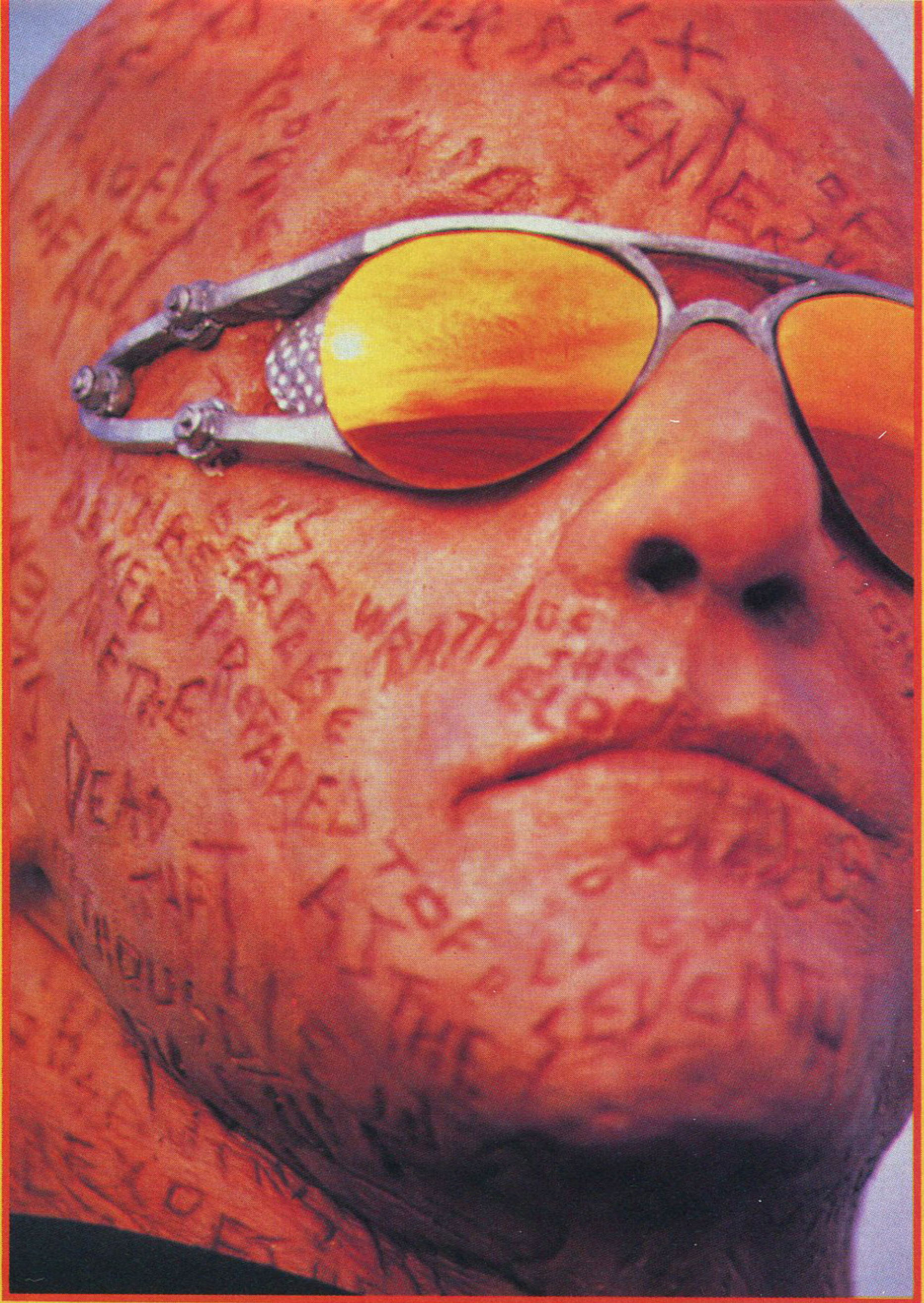
Johnson next tackled the episode "Love Hurts," which told the tale of a woman who bonds with the spirit of a dead man and brings him back to life, only to discover that he was an organ donor and that the designated parts had been removed. The dead man with holes brought Johnson back to an old trick he used on *Nightmare 4*. "We built a teeter-totter rig and rebuilt the old Robert Englund body shell so that we could put it and the actor on a sideboard and see the background through the open cavities in his body."

> **"I had to keep Freddy out of my mind when I was creating Hellcop's makeup."**

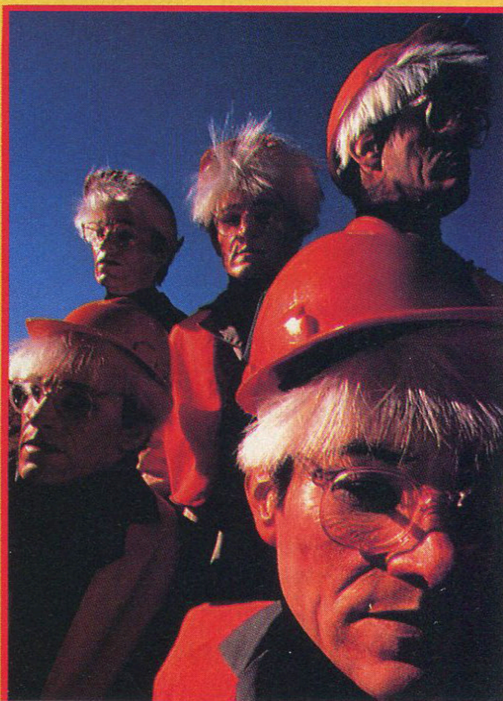
In the middle of production on "Love Hurts," the *Monsters* folks came in and asked what Johnson was doing the following week. The installment "Half As Old As Time" soon required his services. "They wanted an old age makeup, and they needed it Tuesday," he scoffs. "This was Friday. So I got ahold of the actor [Leif Garrett], did a life cast, molded the piece over the weekend, got a foam cast out on Monday and brought it to the set Tuesday. And believe me, it's a surprise when stuff turns out as well as that rush job."

"Steve gave us good special effects on a budget which, as a producer, I really appreciated," praises *Monsters*' Anthony Santa Croce. "He was always good about using basic ideas as a springboard to come up with even more imaginative ideas and concepts."

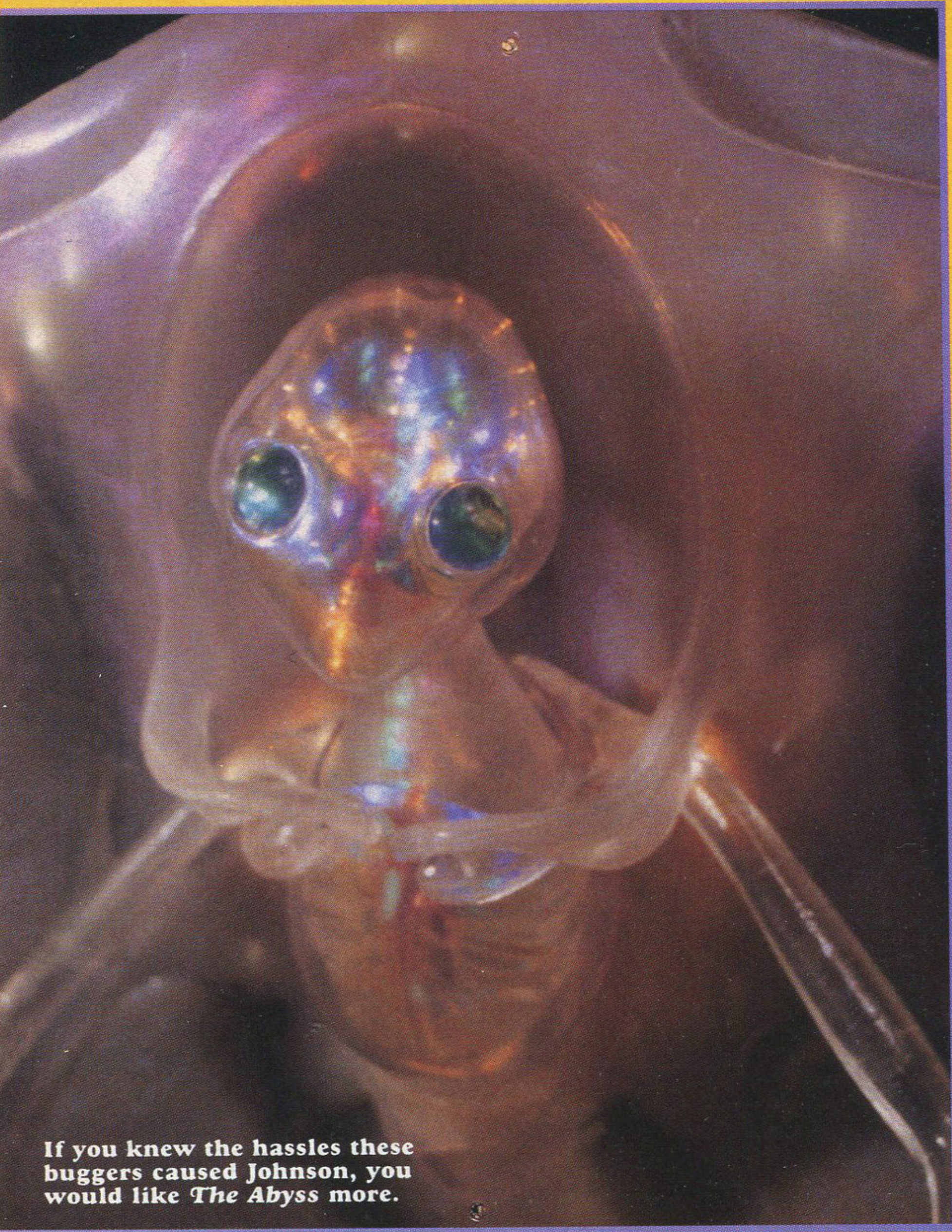
Johnson's biggest recent gig was *The Abyss*. His feelings going



The lawman of the nether region: You can read him like a book.



This is how hell should be for all the journalists who overuse that Warhol quote about being famous for 15 minutes.



If you knew the hassles these buggers caused Johnson, you would like *The Abyss* more.

Photo: Courtesy Steve Johnson

into that underwater SF adventure were good. "I always felt that Jim Cameron would be the best director a makeup artist could work for because he understands effects," Johnson relates. "I was becoming a bit jaded from spending so much time working on concepts, taking them over to the set and having them thrown out the window. I figured if I ever got to work for Cameron, those days would be over because he really understands this stuff."

It was after winning the assignment to create the aliens seen at the film's end that he found the task literally undoable. "It really was," groans Johnson. "Cameron asked for three impossible things: He wanted something that was going to work underwater, would glow and would be transparent. Having just one of those things to do would be enough to cause nightmares. Jim wanted all three at once.

"We went through a long period of research and development where we found that we could get the creatures to do two of the three things but never all three at once," the FX man adds. "We tried every possibility and nothing seemed to work." Johnson finally stumbled upon the solution by treating urethane, vacuform plastic with a laminated film that, when pressed into the plastic, creates an iridescence that shimmers and changes colors.

"They were just difficult to control," explains Johnson. "Because they were clear, there was no way to hide any mechanisms. We finally did, through the use of some very complicated opticals. I think the stuff looks great on the screen. I was a little disappointed that some of the qualities we worked on so hard, like the shimmering and glowing, didn't come off to the extent that we hoped. We had to heavily front-light them, so we lost a lot of the fiberoptic intensity."

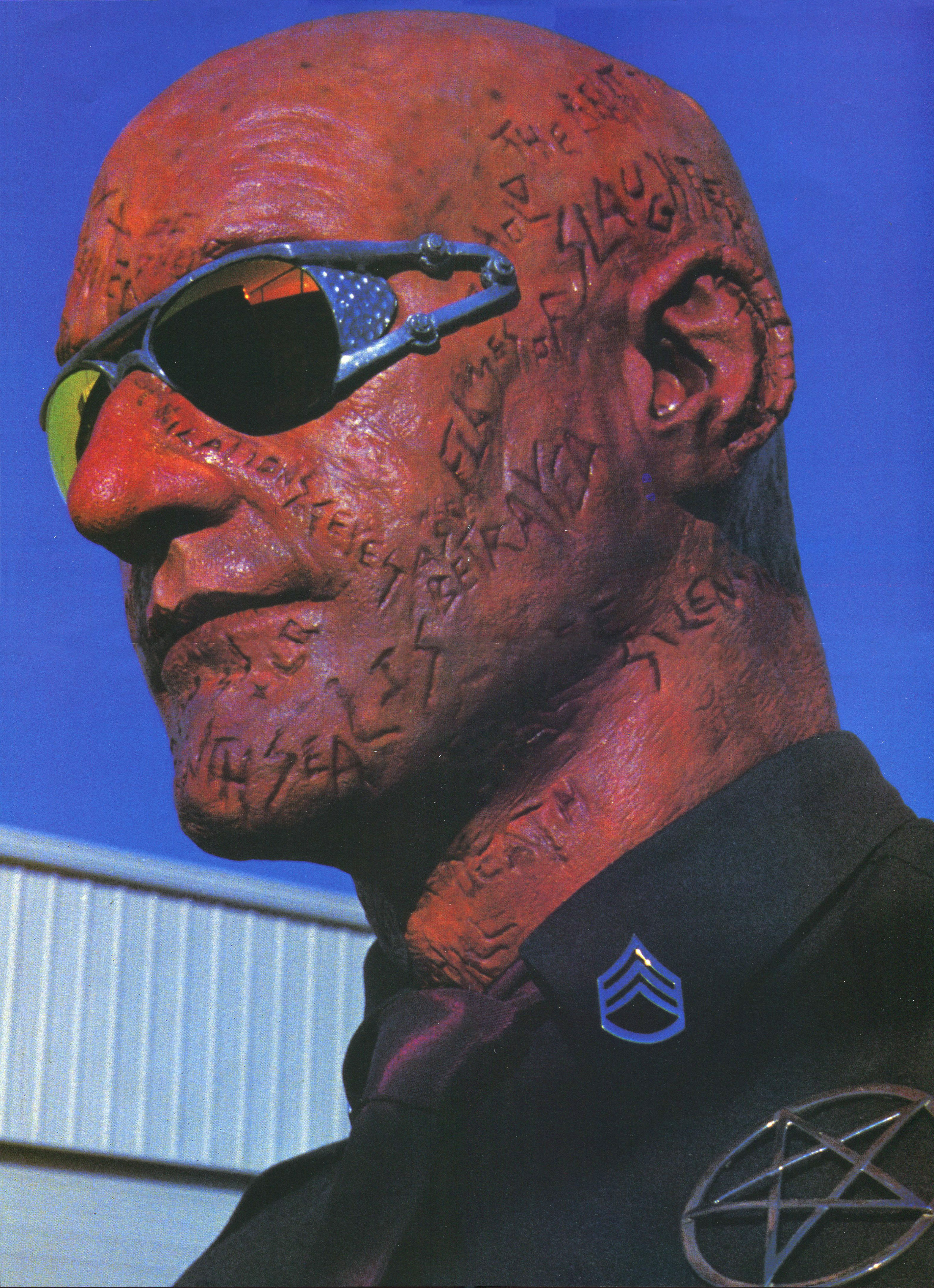
Johnson openly confesses, "*The Abyss* was the only job I ever had where I felt I had done the wrong thing in accepting it. I sat in this shop late at night, pulling my hair out because the answers to the problems seemed impossible. But we were able to pull it off, and I'm awfully proud of that."

The Exorcist is the only movie ever to truly scare Steve Johnson, and so it was like a wish come true when that film's director, William Friedkin, rang him up with a request for his latest film, *The Guardian*. "He needed an animated wolf puppet, which was no great challenge," Johnson details. "In the process of doing that, I met with him, and he was so impressed with my reel that he asked me to come up with some additional sequences. I pitched him on an idea for a scene in which a child is absorbed into a tree. He loved it, but unfortunately the price was too high."

Johnson is presently sorting through a number of possible projects. There's talk that he might play a hand in a spirited little shocker called *The Contortionist*. He's also about to join the growing ranks of FX people-turned-directors.

"All I can tell you is that it's a genre film," he hedges. "Nobody's signed any papers yet, so I don't really want to say too much.

"My career is going well, but in a sense, it was starting to become too much like work," Johnson concludes. "I'm happy and content at this point. For the first time in a long while, I'm starting to think that this is not the end. And that's a real exciting thought."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By EDWARD FRENCH

MAKEUP **FX** LAB

Bruno the Oozing Corpse

Whispers

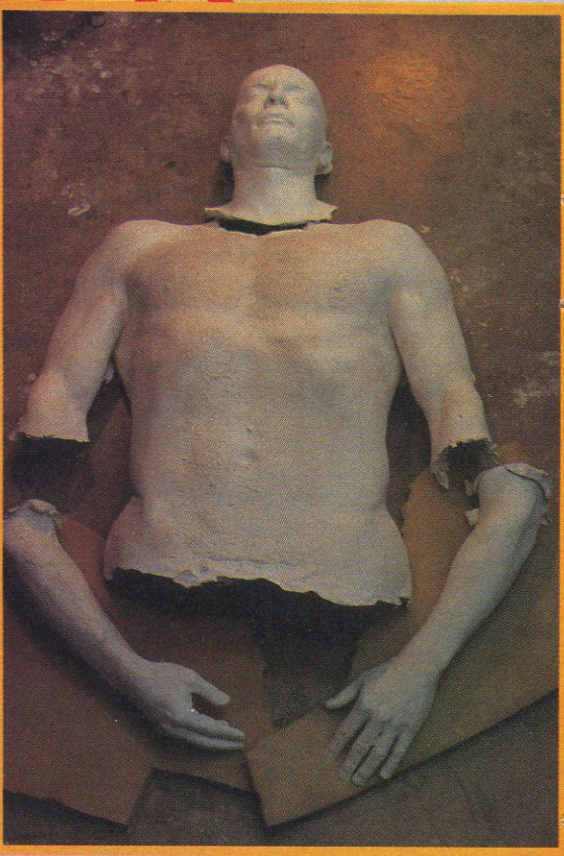


PHOTO 2: The casting process begins at 10:30 p.m. Thursday and ends at 2:30 a.m. Friday. LeClerc flies to Montreal later in the morning to film scenes as Clavel.

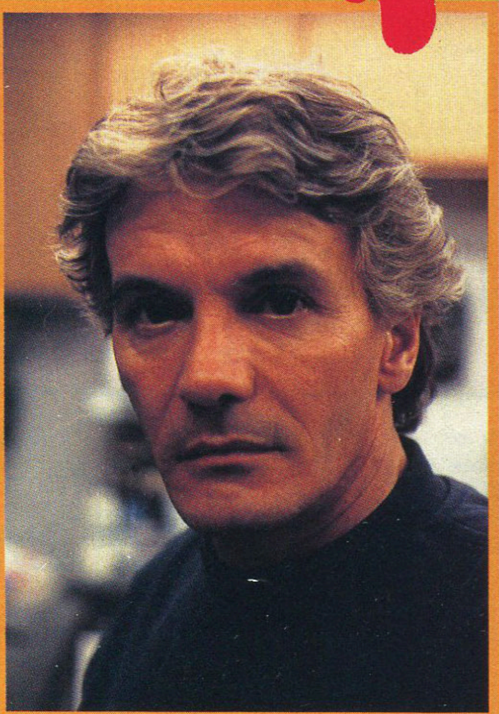
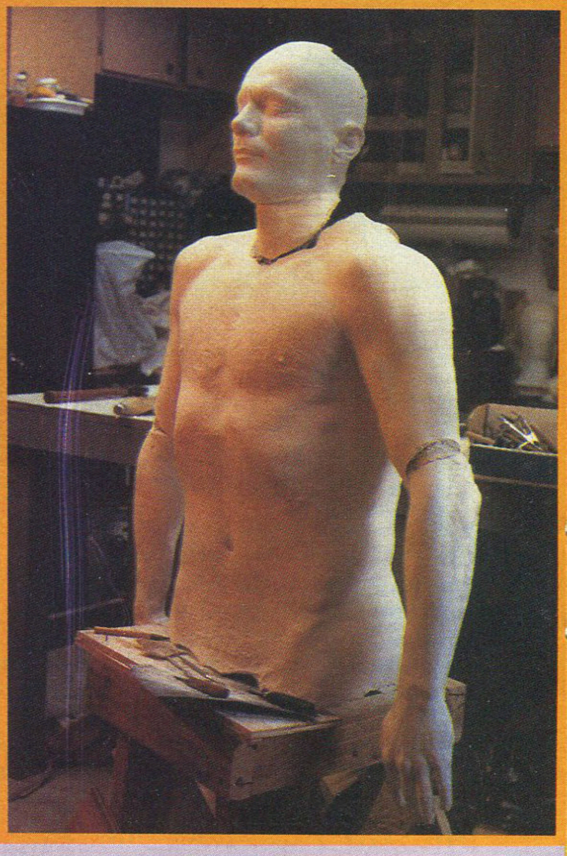


PHOTO 1: Stoic actor Jean LeClerc arrives at the makeup lab for his head and upper-body cast after taping a segment of *All My Children* in New York and flying for six hours to California.

All Photos: Courtesy Ed French

This strange odyssey begins when makeup mogul Joe Blasco calls me at my Calabasas studio. Cinepix of Canada needs FX makeup for their current production, Dean Koontz's *Whispers*, starring Chris Sarandon. Joe had aided them before, most notably on David Cronenberg's *They Came from Within*. This time, however, Joe's busy schedule forces him to pass along to me the ghoulish assignment of fabricating a realistic cadaver. He explains that the naked corpse exhibits signs of desiccation and that the immediate cause of death is two homicidal stab wounds in the abdomen; the subject was a psycho who had the tables turned on him and represents one half of a demented duo of twins sharing the same sick identity, Bruno Clavel. Even in death, the siblings are inseparable, so live Bruno bodysnatches his brother from the morgue. A model of the actor playing the twins will have to stand up to the camera's lingering scrutiny while being tucked into his bed for the night. It is an offer so lucrative and in

PHOTO 3: Pipes, more plaster, reference photos, knowledge of anatomy and imagination aid in assembling the pieces. The model is refined with sandpaper, and gaps in the sculpture are filled with plastilina clay, modeled and detailed.



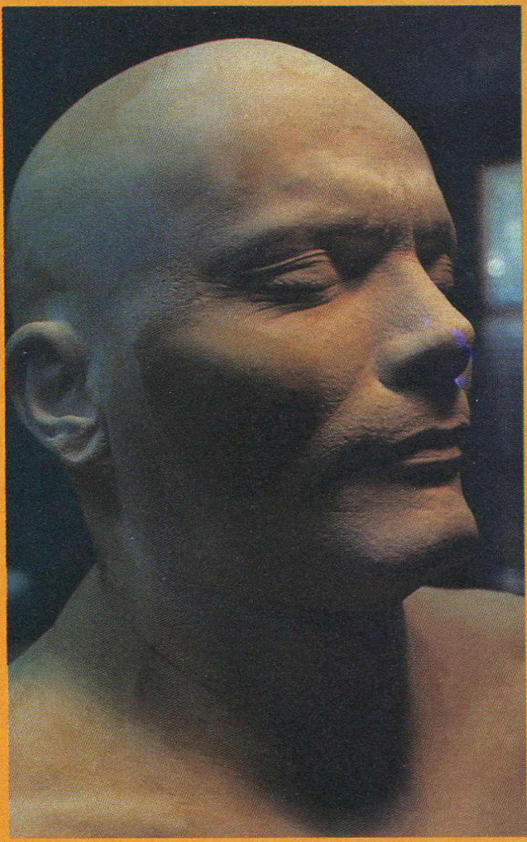
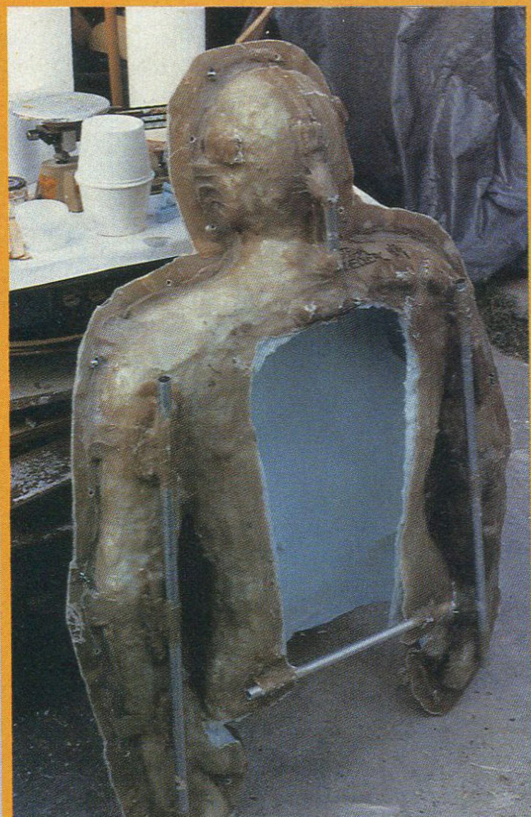


PHOTO 4: Sculpture completed. After a light spray of parfilm over the model, about 12,000 grams of thickened 920 silicone from Silicones Inc. is applied in layers to make a one-piece negative impression.

PHOTO 5: Cabosil and Fastcast are added to the 920 silicone to speed the setting time, then a two-piece fiberglass case mold is fabricated over the silicone.



such appallingly bad taste that I accept it immediately.

With a deadline of a mere 13 days till delivery, my first task is to come up with a plan detailing precisely what I will accomplish during each day of preparation, as well as my choices of techniques and materials. My technical skills will produce the requisite sculpture and molds that result in an unpainted duplicate of Bruno (actor Jean LeClerc). But the final step of realistically painting and detailing the model will elevate the artifice to the level of art. The dead inspire not only fear but also awe and mystery. That is how I hope my creation will initially affect the audience.

Once in Montreal, Dead Bruno is ceremoniously uncrated and the producers and director applaud my vision. Jocular Jean LeClerc, however, suddenly becomes quiet; he has apparently been caught off guard by the first sight of his dead alter ego. Whatever he is thinking about at this moment will perhaps fuel his acting later while the camera rolls on their scene. Jean will actually invest this bizarre relationship with a surprising level of tragic poignancy.

But before that, director Doug Jackson, who has worked on *The Twilight Zone* and *Friday the 13th: The Series*, wants to make the corpse look even more deceased. "Perhaps whiter or grayer," he suggests. That's precisely the sort of cliched look that I want to avoid for this somewhat naturalistic melodrama, so I come up with a blistering autopsy scar that will give our model that unmistakable postmortem aura. Doug agrees that Bruno will now receive the stamp of approval from any coroner. The producers are also delighted and come up with an even *more* tasteful suggestion: Live Bruno will tenderly open dead Bruno's eyelids, and a malodorous liquid will ooze out of the eyesockets.

Although Jean is a capable thespian, I quickly conclude that he will probably not be reliable enough to exude pus from his own eyes on cue. The solution is "Little Bruno," a spare noggin I pulled out of

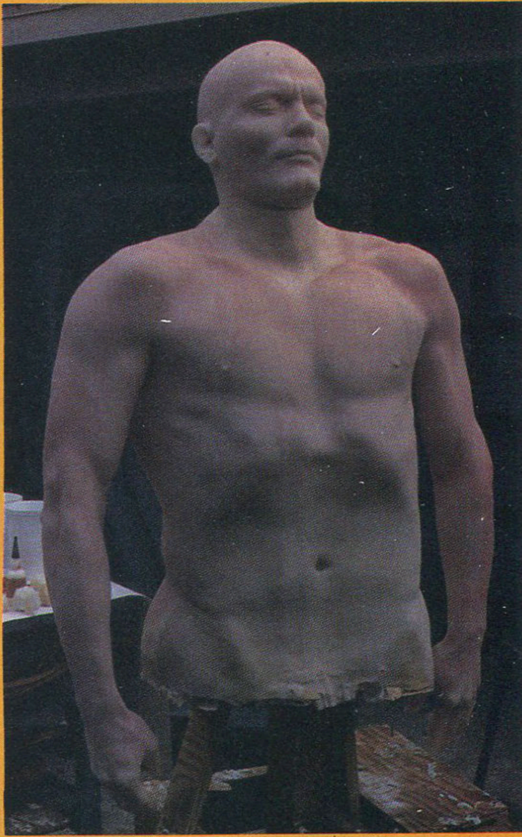
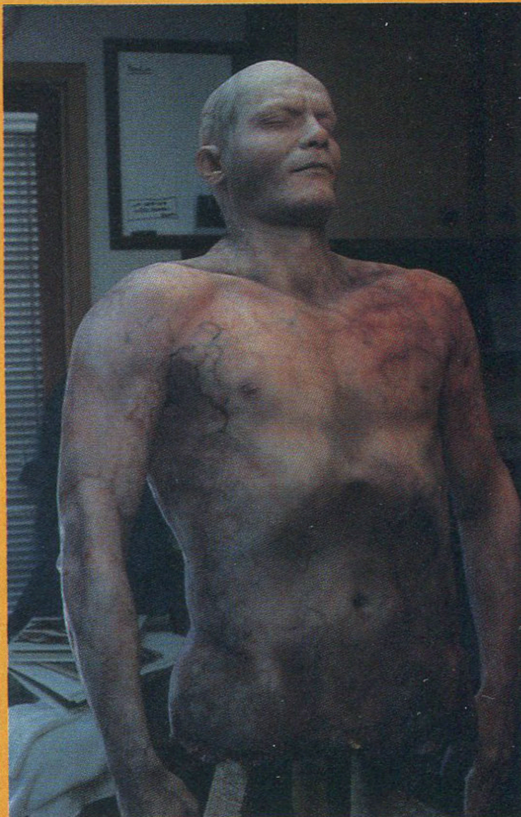


PHOTO 6: By the end of the next day, a usable model is out of the mold. The skin is Polytech's fast-setting EST-40 filled with Burman's Polysoft.

PHOTO 7: The body is primed for an airbrushed undercoat of BJB paints. Painting is completed by sponging layers of PA-X washes over the previously airbrushed distended veins.



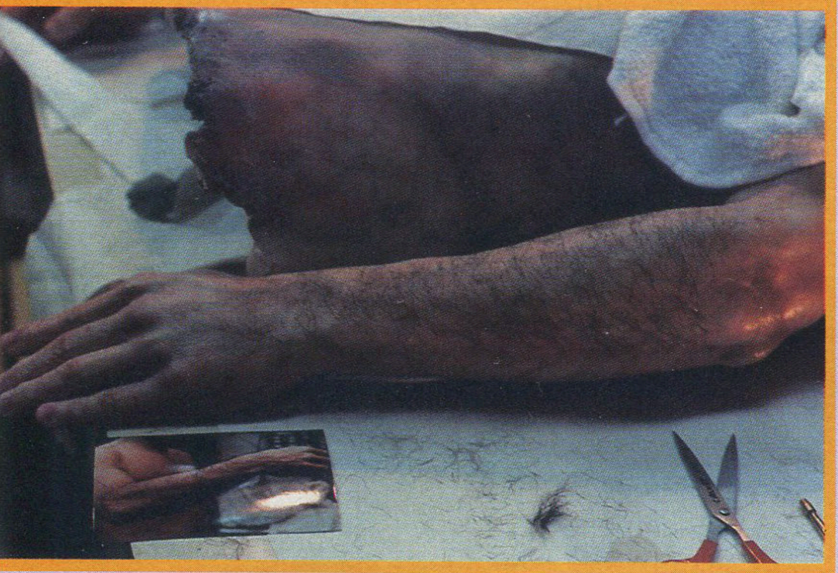


PHOTO 8: Human hairs individually inserted into the EST-40 skin enhance the effect.

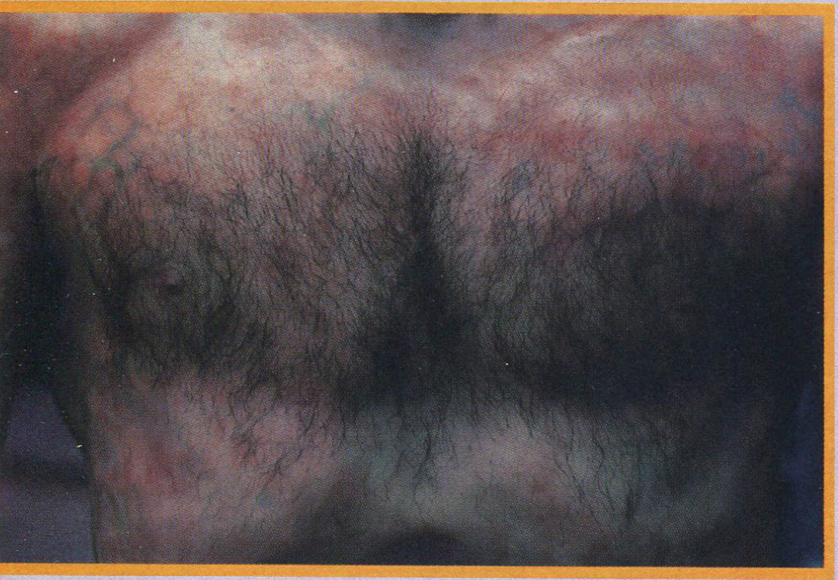


PHOTO 9: A full day is spent on planting all the chest hairs. Other details are fine-tuned at this time, including dimensional fingernails made from Pliatex rubber.

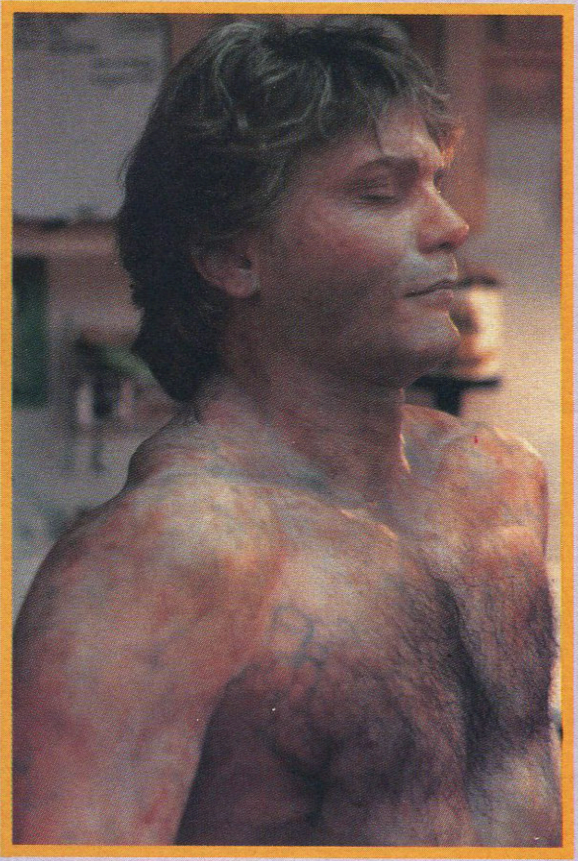
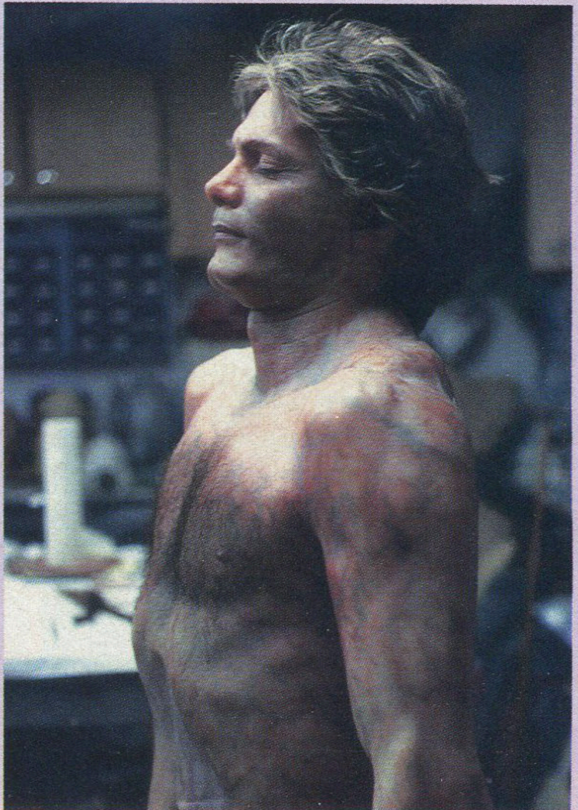


PHOTO 10: A human hair wig is attached with cynoacrylate, and more hairs are individually punched into the scalp to make the hairline appear natural.

PHOTO 11: For the final day of preparation, the eyebrows are crepe wool-applied with Dow Corning 355 adhesive. Cosmetic eyelashes are trimmed and glued to the lids. PA-X paint is stippled to simulate beard stubble.



the LeClerc mold for paint tests. Luckily, I had transported it to the location with me. I nimbly prep the head with artificial eyes, vinyl tubing, and prosthetic eyelids that can be manually opened for a close-up insert shot.

Peter Benison, the 2nd unit cinematographer on *The Gate*, photographs the critical FX shots involving Big and Little Bruno. Three long days are spent covering these scenes to insure that everything works perfectly. The dailies first reveal Dead Bruno from a view "looking down gigantically, like Death." Soundless takes of the corpse play to the hushed audience in the screening room. It is not unlike the respectful silence at a wake—the best reaction I could have hoped for. Now the sound takes begin with live Bruno's one-sided conversation. LeClerc mimes opening the cadaver's eyes and a tangible air of nausea creeps through the spectators when Little Bruno's head leaks its decaying contents in close-up. Amazing! A little baby shampoo, food coloring and buttermilk pumped through a syringe, and I'm the Louis Pasteur of putrescence.

(Special thanks to: Joe Blasco, W.M. Creations, the crew of *Whispers*, Camille Calvet, and especially Jean LeClerc.)

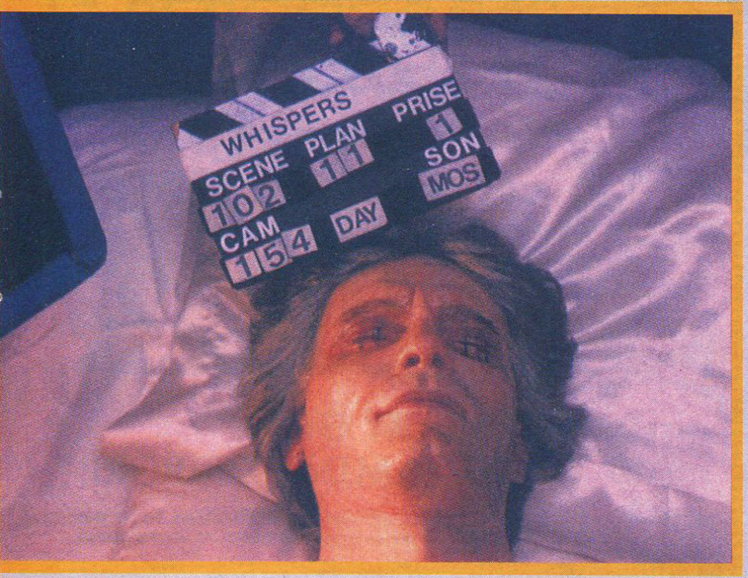


PHOTO 12: The Bruno model makes his motion picture debut. A medical dummy's legs stand in for the lower body, which is covered by bed sheets.

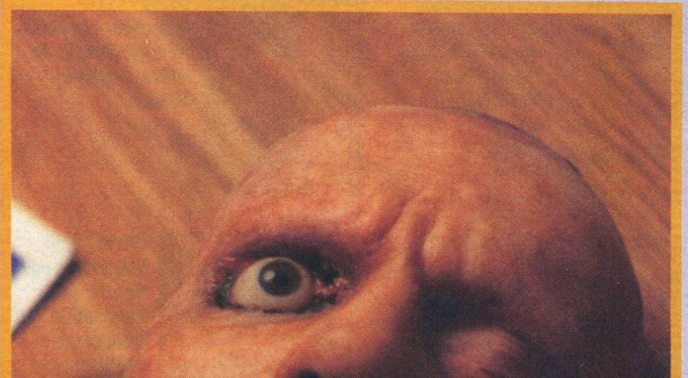


PHOTO 13: The partially completed Little Bruno. Once his left eyelid is applied and the eyebrows are meticulously hand-laid, he will be ready for the scene where putrescence oozes from his eyesockets.

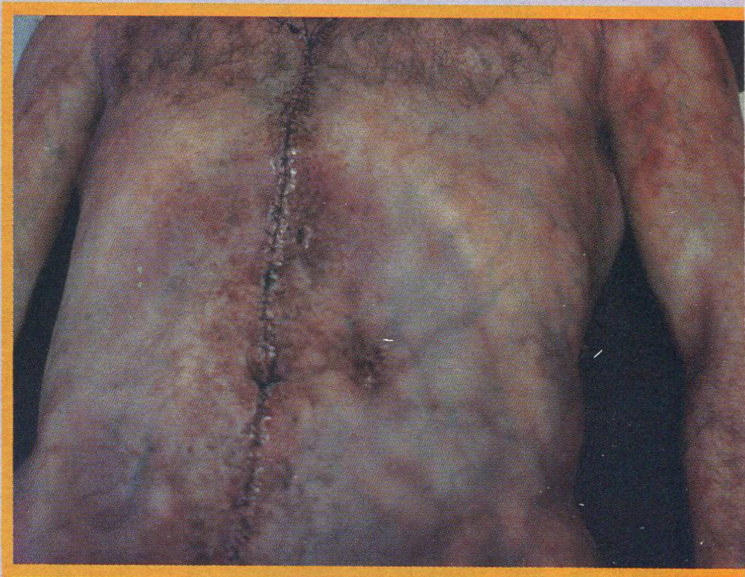


PHOTO 14: The Bruno dummy, looking like a forensic pathologist's pinup. The autopsy mark is scar plastic. Painting with PA-X wash simulates distended veins and decomposing blood.

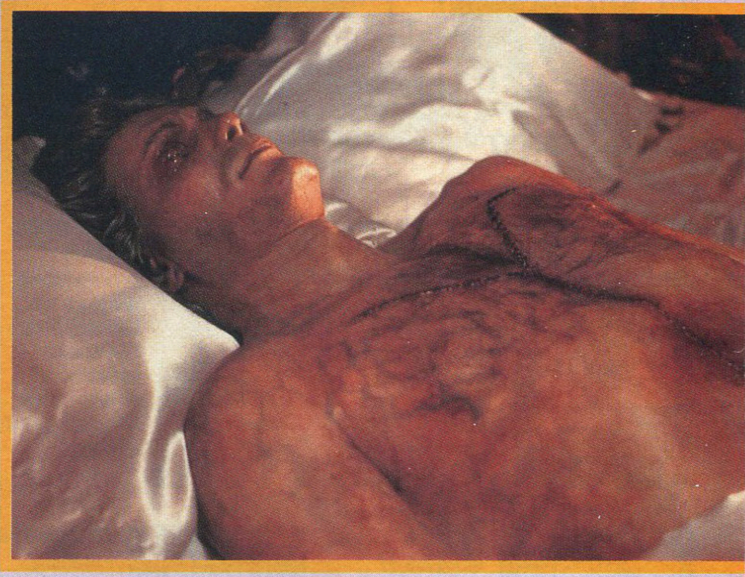


PHOTO 15: Prosthetic appliances on the full-scale Bruno complete the illusion of open eyes.

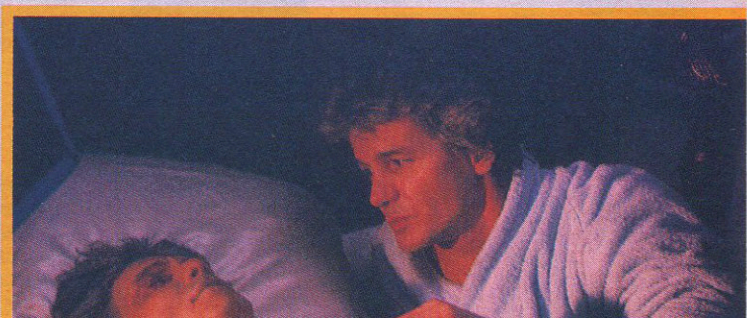


PHOTO 16: Jean LeClerc pays final respects to his twin brother. It's a wrap!

Ed French's makeup credits include The First Power, The Guardian *and Fox Television's* Alien Nation.

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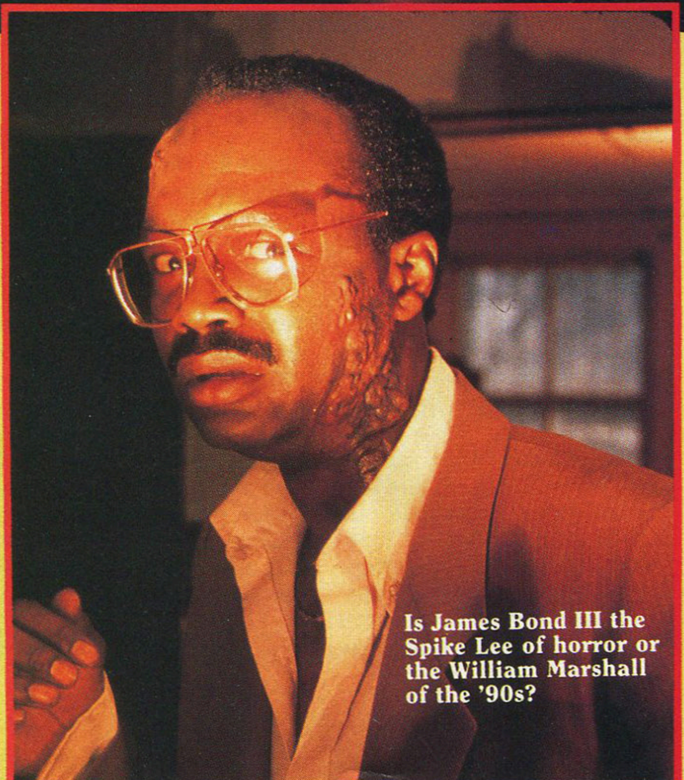
HORRORSCOPE

DEF by TEMPTATION

While it may or may not follow the blaxploitation tradition, *Def By Temptation* hopefully signals the arrival of black genre filmmakers.

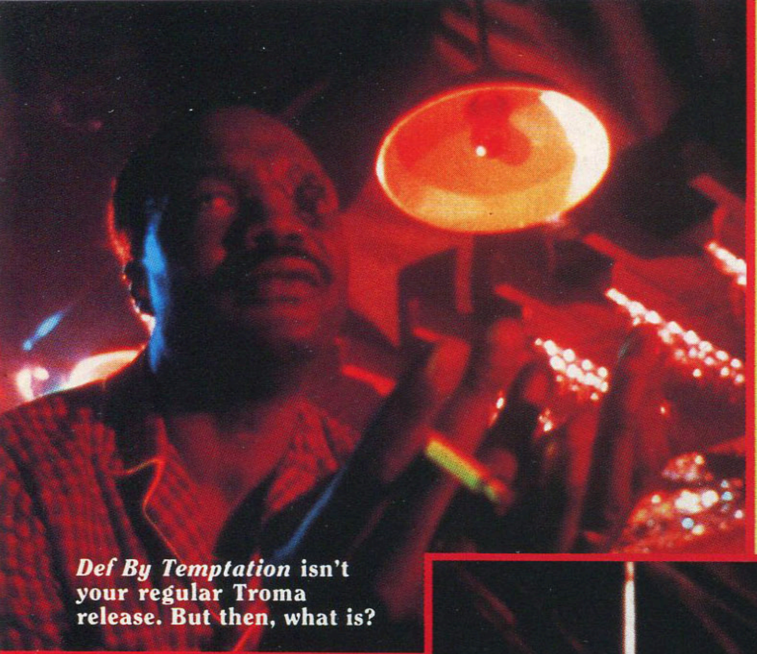


Is James Bond III the Spike Lee of horror or the William Marshall of the '90s?

Back in the early 1970s, as producers belatedly became aware of the large black movie audience, the blaxploitation trend was born and quickly moved into the horror genre. After the releases of the popular *Blacula* and such obscure titles as *Blackenstein* and *Black the Ripper*, this particular subgenre died out. Now, however, Troma is launching *Def by Temptation*, the first horror film with a largely black cast and crew in some time.

But don't call it a traditional blaxploitation film. Says filmmaker James Bond III, "Critics can place it—and are going to place it—in the category they think it fits best. It's a black film in one sense, but it's made for all audiences. My characters could be white, black, purple, green, whatever. I tried to make the film honestly, so that the audience can walk out having related to the film in the manner which I intended."

Not only did Bond write, produce and direct the film, he also stars in it as Joel, a young man told by his grandmother that he is to follow in the family tradition of becoming a minister. Uncertain whether this is how he wants to spend his life, he goes to the big city to see his friend "K" (Kadeem Hardison) and get his head together. But he is soon forced to shore up all his faith when he is faced with a demonic temptress (Cynthia Bond) determined to destroy him.



***Def By Temptation* isn't your regular Troma release. But then, what is?**

Bond, who describes himself as "a child actor who grew up on television," came up with *Temptation* as a vehicle to move into more adult roles. "At the time," he explains, "there were various projects out that pertained to comedy from black filmmakers, and I didn't want to follow down that road; I wanted to be a trendsetter and do something different. I decided to take black film to another level, and I'm doing that by making genre films. There's a huge black film audience and there's a huge horror film audience, and I thought if I could fuse the two audiences, I'd have something that would be special."

After completing the script, Bond used his years of experience and connections in the industry to get it made. Having acted in Spike Lee's *School Daze*, he was able to land Lee's cinematographer Ernest Dickerson, and also cast actor Bill Nunn prior to his acclaimed performance as Radio Raheem in *Do the Right Thing*. Bond's financing came from a company called Hush Productions, and he was able to maintain creative control throughout the filming.

"I wouldn't have done it any other way," he swears. "I went in making it clear that whether the project was successful or not, it wasn't going to be at the hand of someone else. I needed to realize my vision to the end."

While it may or may not follow the blaxploitation tradition, *Def By Temptation* hopefully signals the arrival of black genre filmmakers.

Photos: Copyright Troma

Part of that vision called for a number of gruesome apparitions and violence, which is where makeup FX creator Rob Benevides came in. Benevides, whose credits include the terror-on-campus thriller *Abadon* (available as part of the video release *Fright House*), and award-winning work on several short films, contributed a TV set that sucks in a character and spits him out in a bloody mess, a zombie bar scene, various wounds for the evil woman's victims, and the temptress makeup itself. "That was a one-piece prosthetic," he elaborates, "with large glass eyes, and she had her fangs as well. Then there was a prosthetic glove I made, which made her arm look like it was really muscular and had these long claws on it. The idea was that she was an asymmetrically transforming creature. Only the parts that she needed would change, so if she wanted to kill someone with her hand, she'd just transform the hand."

Benevides found that the relatively small scale of the film made it an easy step up from the shorts he had worked on, and enjoyed working with Bond. "We had a good rapport going, because he likes the same kind of stuff I do, the same films and effects. He was pretty receptive to the time it takes for an effect setup, and he was always excited and supportive of what I was doing. We had a good time."

Bond concurs, calling Benevides "very professional, very innovative; he saved a great deal of time. And the effects are good. They're good, solid effects, and coupled with Ernest's photography, the production design by David Carrington, and the music by Paul Laurence, give the film its style and presence, and make it scary. And I was fortunate enough to conduct it all."

Although Bond had few problems doubling as both filmmaker and star, he did find it a little difficult to get used to at first. "We were in the second day of shooting, and I was rehearsing a scene, as an actor, with the lead actress. I had a sudden inspiration about the character, and I turned to tell the director about it." He mimics turning, then suddenly stopping in realization, and laughs. "I realized from that point on that I was going to love it."

Bond brought the film to Troma for postproduction, and later hammered out a distribution deal with the company. As *Temptation* makes its way across the country in regional release, Bond is planning his next film, another horror title on which he will reteam with Hardison. "And this one," he promises, "will be *real* scary."

—Michael Gingold

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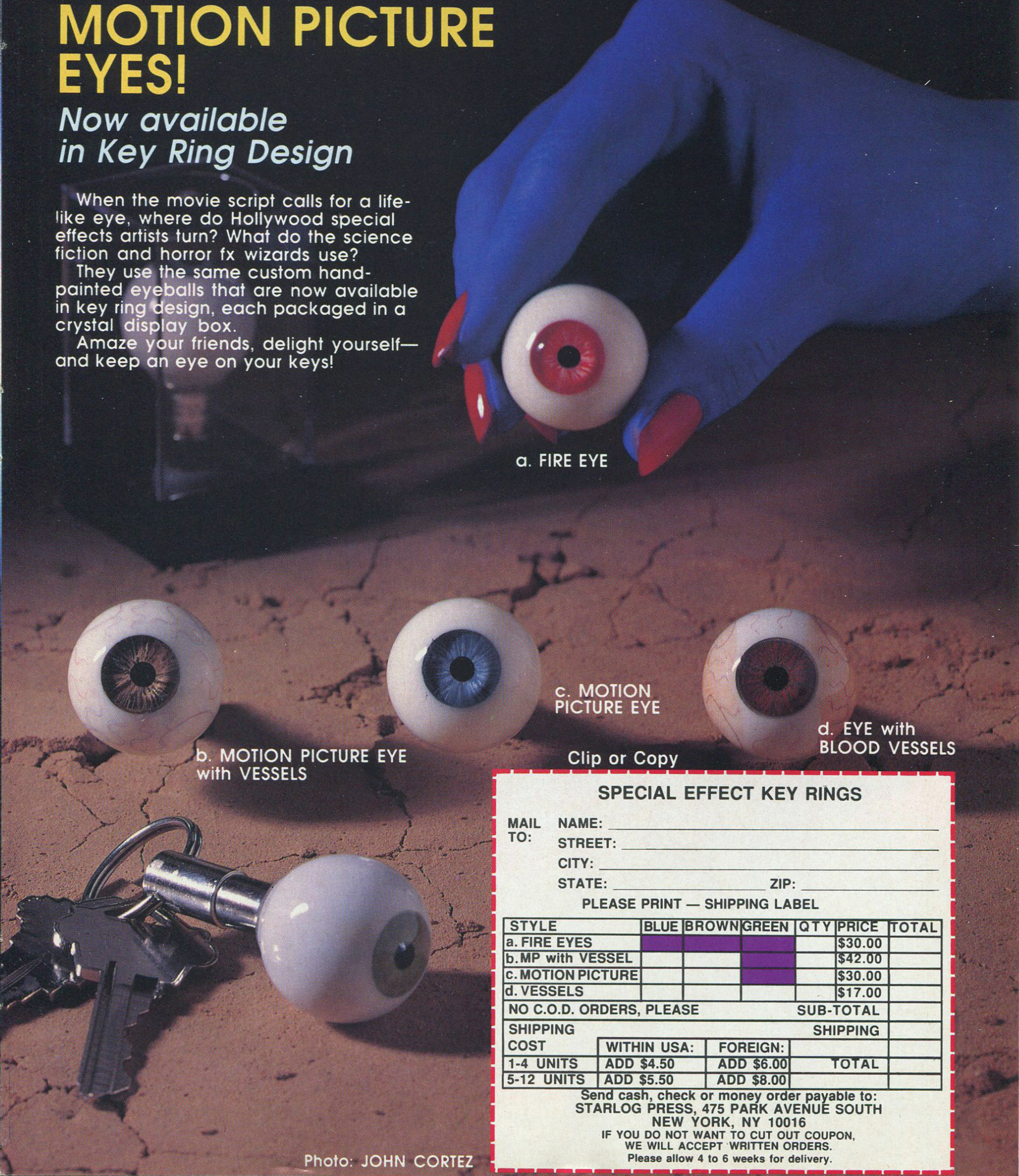

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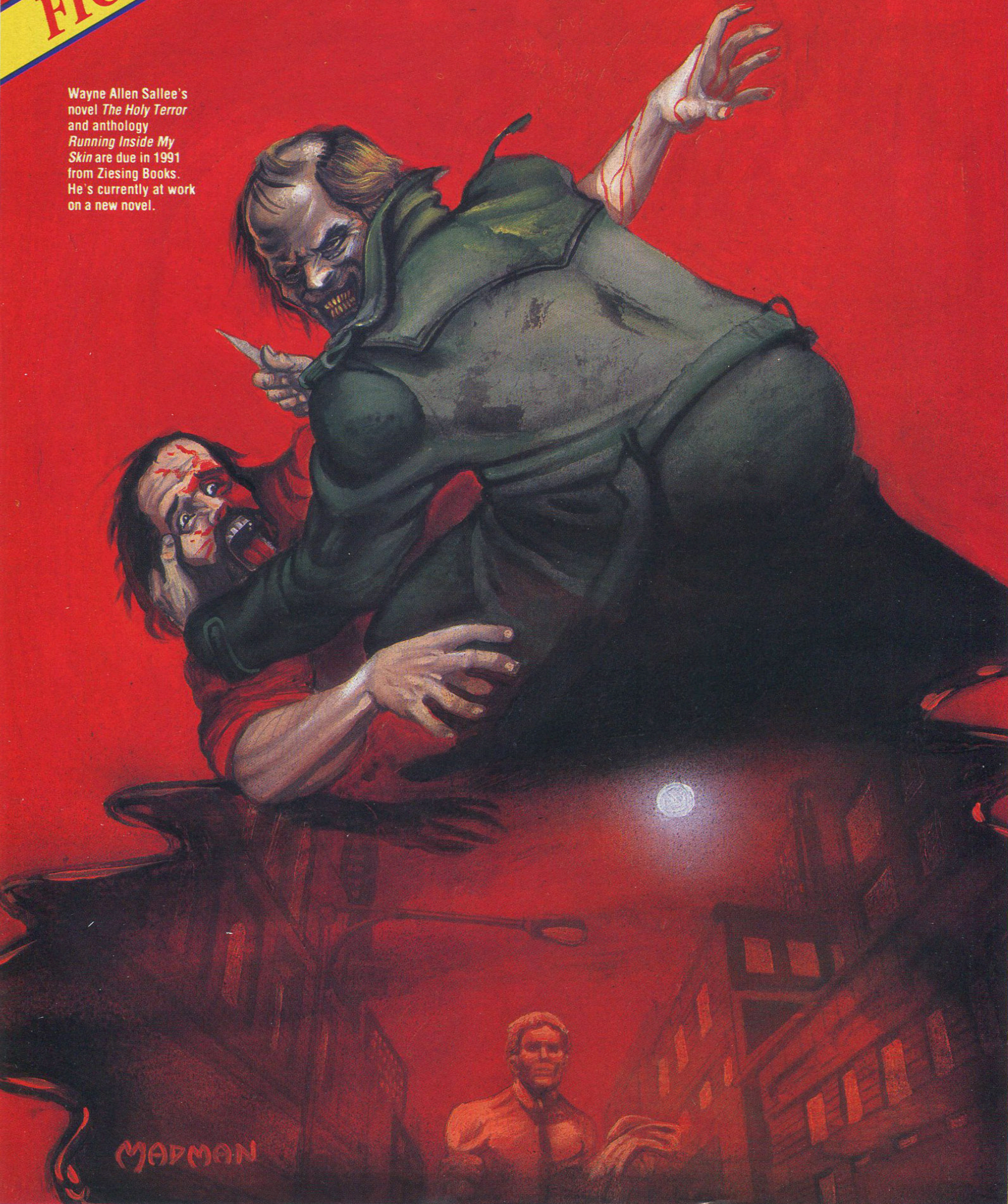
Wayne Allen Sallee's novel *The Holy Terror* and anthology *Running Inside My Skin* are due in 1991 from Ziesing Books. He's currently at work on a new novel.



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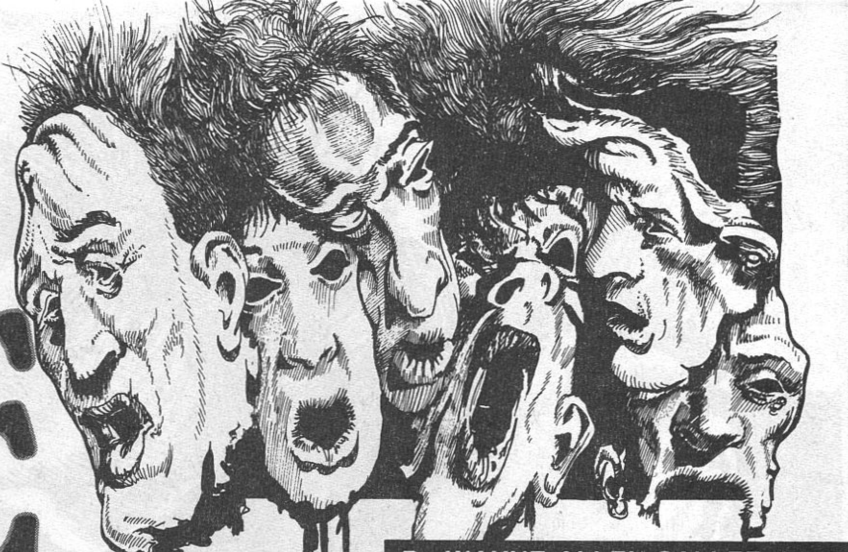


By WAYNE ALLEN SALLEE

Rory Grogan knew it was the man he had been looking for (well, keeping an eye out for; *looking* sounded like finding the guy was his life's pursuit, and an image of Lieutenant Gerard hunting Richard Kimball flashed through his mind) over the last eighteen months. The man (OK, the *bum*—is that such a bad word to say?) who had stunk of stale sweat and urine had walked up to Grogan at the Sheridan bus stop and offered to cannibalize himself for small change.

Actually, the man with the dirty mop of brown hair and the red stubble on his chin had proffered small scraps of stained paper. Each bus transfer-sized page had every inch covered with pen and pencil lines or surprisingly good sketches of the downtown Loop area. These he was willing to part with for a quarter. All half-dozen pages.

Hmphm. The sound was that of someone belching at the bottom of a deep well. Hollow. Lifeless.

Grogan remembered that late afternoon a year and a half ago quite clearly, remembered thinking how long it had taken the bum to fill those pages. The bum, while smelling a bit ripe, did not really look like a Mad Dog wino (Grogan's father's pet term—Mad Dog standing for Mogen David 20/20—for anyone not gainfully employed the way *he* was, if you could call being night manager at the Bally arcade on Dearborn a fine, upstanding job); his clothes were fairly well matched, the shoes not the least bit raggedy. And Grogan smelled no booze on the man's breath.

The phrases on the dog-eared bit of what had been canary-colored paper, though mystical in appearance, were coherent and private-sounding, hence the cannibalism metaphor Grogan had used in his repeated tellings of the story to friends. A writer himself, Grogan knew that showing anyone, even your most intimate friends, your thoughts and beliefs, disguised though they might be in flowered or bruised prose, was tantamount to pulling out chunks of your brain and passing them out to the crowd, doing the old *Jesus Christ this is my body* routine.

And the guy had only asked for a bleeding quarter, the price of a lousy *Tribune*, but Grogan waffled, having barely enough funds to grab a couple of sliders at the White Castle on Devon. He had told the man that he had no money to spare and stared south to see if the 151 bus was coming, inwardly debating whether or not to skip the thirty-five-cent burgers. He turned back too late, though; the man had disappeared, probably within the catacomb maze of alleys behind the cathedral-like ruins of the then-vacant Chicago theater. Grogan had contemplated a quick search, but then the green limousine had coughed and hitched its way to the bus stop. Grogan had cursed himself the entire trip home. Eighteen months ago.

Grogan was now living further east, just a block from Belmont Harbor, and so it was that he spotted the bu—the *man* (he chided himself again. The 30-year-old son was thinking more like his 50-year-old father every day) while staring out toward the lake from the spotless window of the Outer Drive Express. The man was dressed differently, wearing a bulky, beltless pea-green overcoat that bulged in several places. He had been a lot thinner; it seemed strange to see a street person actually *gain* weight.

But Grogan knew the face, though—the red stubble, the sharp jawline, the ratty eyebrows. One thing struck him as strange: The tan overcoat was buttoned to the collar despite the August heat. Grogan dismissed the observation immediately; all street people wore their own style of clothes, set their own trends. And there *was* a nice breeze off Lake Michigan.

Still, why all the way to the collar? The question stuck in Grogan's mind. Perhaps he was shoplifting. Whatever. Grogan *had* to see this man, give him money—a buck, two, three—for his scrawls and doodles. He had to see those sketches again.

Grogan lurched for the stop buzzer just as the bus hit Walton. The inertia as the bus swerved around a Checker cab brought Grogan's face within an inch of

the Spanish-language instructions for debarking the bus.

He hit the street running, back south along Michigan, the sun shooting strobes into his eyes as he passed a dozen high-rise buildings, his plastic frame glasses drooping from the bridge of his oily, sweating nose.

How could the man have disappeared so quickly? It was less than a block north since he'd gotten off the bus, Grogan thought, less than a minute since he'd last had the man in his sights. Grogan dodged through the afternoon shopping crowd, gazing every which way. He stared into the shop windows, on the chance that the enigmatic man had wandered into Gucci's or Burberry's, where a distraught counter clerk would have happily given any vagrant a dollar just to leave the premises without upsetting the clientele. Grogan even stared into the green-hued windows of Bennigan's; a cute brunette caught his eye and seductively sucked on the straw of her pina colada.

It was no use. He was gone.

Walking dejectedly back to the bus stop, Grogan heard an odd sound, one almost out of place with the rest of the world. He had an uncle in Minnesota who had contracted throat cancer, and the first time that Grogan had heard him speak since his operation, which had been at a family reunion, the bullfrog noise that was his uncle's new voice sounded as alien as Darth Vader or Norman Bates' mother.

Hurmn.

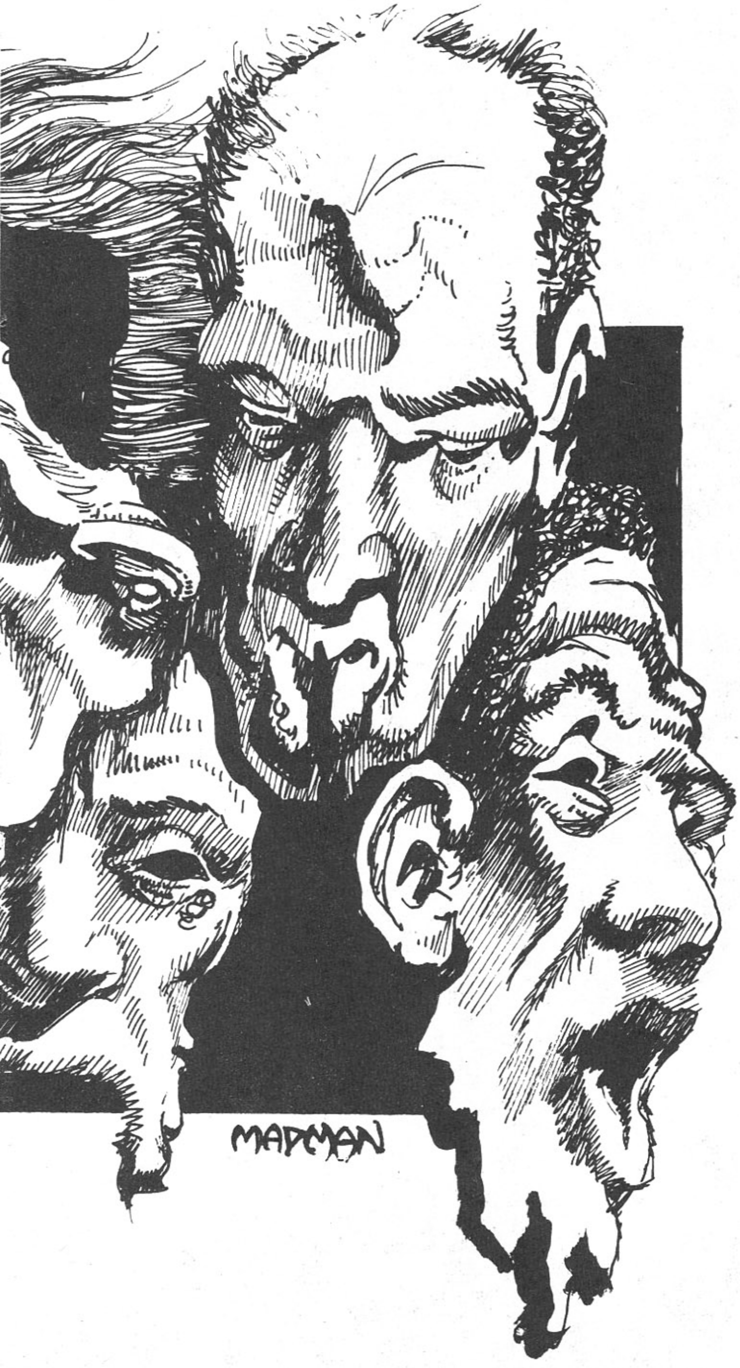
There it was again.

Across the street! Up ahead, he was walking west toward Wabash, his shadow grotesquely elongated in the afternoon sun. Grogan ran into the street without heeding traffic. If he waited for the light to change, the man would be gone.

Three drivers simultaneously flipped him the bird, reminding Grogan of something his friend Whitley had told him about all big city drivers having a hive intelligence, and a Pakistani taxi driver shouted something indecipherable that sounded like, "Wrigley's Juicy Fruit!" There was a loud pop, and Grogan momentarily thought that he had been hit and was hearing some part of his body breaking, but it had only been another cabby, running over a discarded plastic bag.

Stranded on the middle island, unable to cross because of the southbound traffic, Grogan again cursed, this time out loud; spit came out of his mouth and glinted orange in the glare of the setting sun. He was rewarded with another flipped bird and a shout of "*A-hole*!"

After what seemed like an hour, the light changed, and Grogan, straining, saw his quarry rummaging through a trash



can, then turning left on Wabash. The elevated train rumbled by. *Hell's Bells, Grogan, move your skinny butt!* he thought. He *had* to get those sketches from the bum; he had to have them on his bulletin board next to his Elvis concert, his pictures of Gacy and Speck and the shuttle exploding, his Nixon/Agnew button. *But what if he didn't have the sketches anymore?* No, he'd have *some*thing.

Hmm-phrmnm.

A glimpse of the overcoat in the alleyway. Grogan thought of calling out to the man, but didn't. The man wouldn't know him from Adam. So Grogan advanced into the putrid alley, the odors of restaurant garbage and human waste assailing his nostrils immediately. Not many alleyways in the Loop were clean in any way, but in some, the stench was almost overpowering. The alley Grogan and his quarry ("Tonight's episode: Incident in a Windy City!") occupied was one of the latter, and Grogan found his eyes watering slightly.

At the far end of the alley were three fire engine-red waste containers, situated to resemble derailed train cars, or perhaps building blocks for a giant toddler. Behind and beneath Grogan's feet, the State Street subway, hungry with commuters, howled by. Ten feet in the alley and the sound of shoppers, businessmen and the Polish cleaning women whose workday had just begun was lost; twenty feet and the light was gone. Everything was monochrome now. Even the red garbage drums seemed to be a lighter shade of black. A female laugh skittered into the alley and was swallowed.

Another time, Grogan might have had second thoughts about pursuing this further, but he really did want the vagrant's sketches and writings, however good or bad they might be. He had mentally kicked himself in the ass too many times over the last lost opportunity.

Hmphm. The sound was that of someone belching at the bottom of a deep well. Hollow. Lifeless.

Go for it, Grogan nudged himself. *You're the one who's never scared of anything this town throws at you, right, G-man? Right?* Damn straight. Grogan moved to the edge of the nearest bin.

The bum was sitting in a puddle of urine, one leg of his tan corduroy slacks dark from a similar stain. He wore blue Nikes, new-looking and untied, but had on two mismatched argyle socks—one red, one green, the latter bunched around his left ankle. Grogan spotted clotted blood on the exposed rind of the man's calf.

The man looked up. Grogan thought that the vagrant's eyes looked a bit glazed, his cheeks puckered in slightly, as if—*Holy Christ*. The bum stood up, and Grogan expelled all the breath in his lungs. The man had been sitting on top of another *body*. It looked somehow mutilated, but in the split second before the man pulled out the jagged hunting knife, Grogan had no time to figure out exactly what was wrong with the corpse.

The knife was still wet, and skin hung from its serrated edge like ridges of spiced ham; as it arced forward into Grogan's right lung, the man grunted. Too shocked to scream, Grogan stumbled backwards drunkenly, making a wild grab as he fell. A cab honked its horn impatiently in another world. Moviegoers giggled a dimension away.

Three of Grogan's fingers latched onto the collar of the bum's overcoat—his *assailant's* overcoat—and the garment swung open to reveal the man's face ending in a jagged slash just below the jawline, one cheek now flapping freely over the face and body of a decidedly thinner man. Grogan gave one last yank as he hit the ground. The coat opened wide over a dozen pockets, like the kind Grogan had once seen in a jeweler's vest, only these were wider. A dozen faces tumbled out of the ripped pockets.

A bald, Lou Grant face; an Asian one whose sex Grogan was unsure of; a young teen face that still smelled of Stridex and with a punk hairstyle that looked like a Japanese fan; a *dog's* face. Grogan would have laughed if he wasn't scared shitless. A damned *mutt*, the nose deflated without bone beneath, the area around the ears stretched out. This guy was sick, all right.

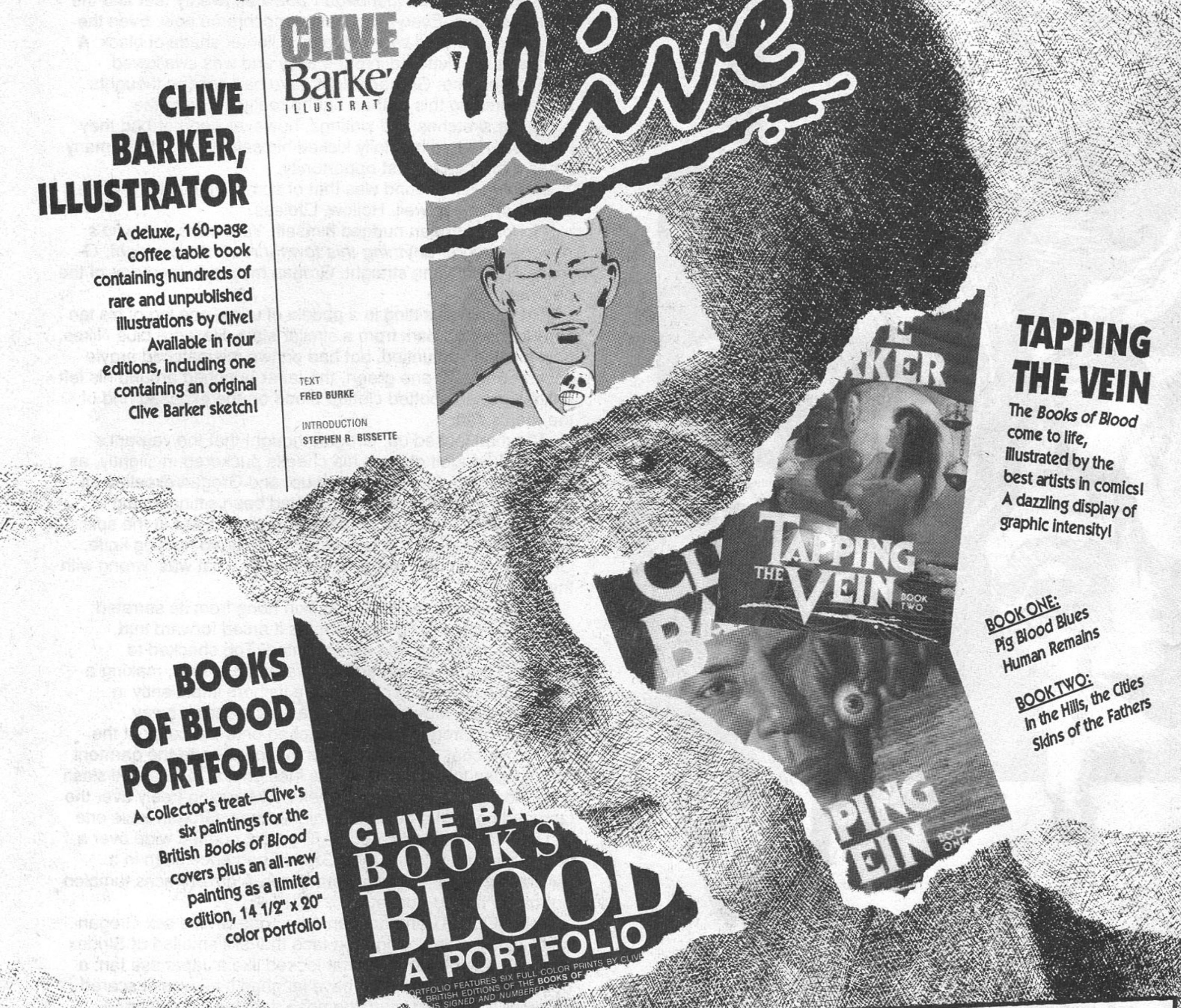
The last face, so utterly beautiful she could only have been a stewardess, landed on Grogan's cheek, knocking off his plastic glasses. Nearsighted as he was, Grogan saw the dead woman's face gain an eerie clarity. Her cheek touched his, and her long blond hair pooled around his ear.

A blur of movement; Grogan could see his assailant pulling his face—the bum's face—off like a stocking mask, but he couldn't see the man's real face. Grogan focused again at the dead flesh caressing his own face. The mouth was open in a slightly seductive manner, but no tongue would ever dart playfully from within again.

The man bent forward, pushing the woman's face away. It dropped to the cement like an old dishrag. Then the man knelt down, the knife glinting, and began to work.

The quickness, the *absurdity* of this all, allowed Grogan to remain conscious until he felt the skin under his chin pulled up over his eyes, and then the true darkness began.

THREE SLICES OF Clive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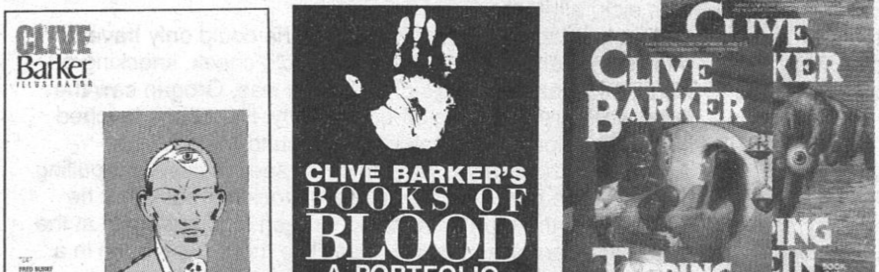
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VIDEO WATCHDOG®

By TIM LUCAS

Face to Face with FACELESS

Watch out! Extended-wear contact lenses can cause permanent eye damage.

At least the Canadians got to see *Faceless*. The movie has yet to snare a video release in the United States.

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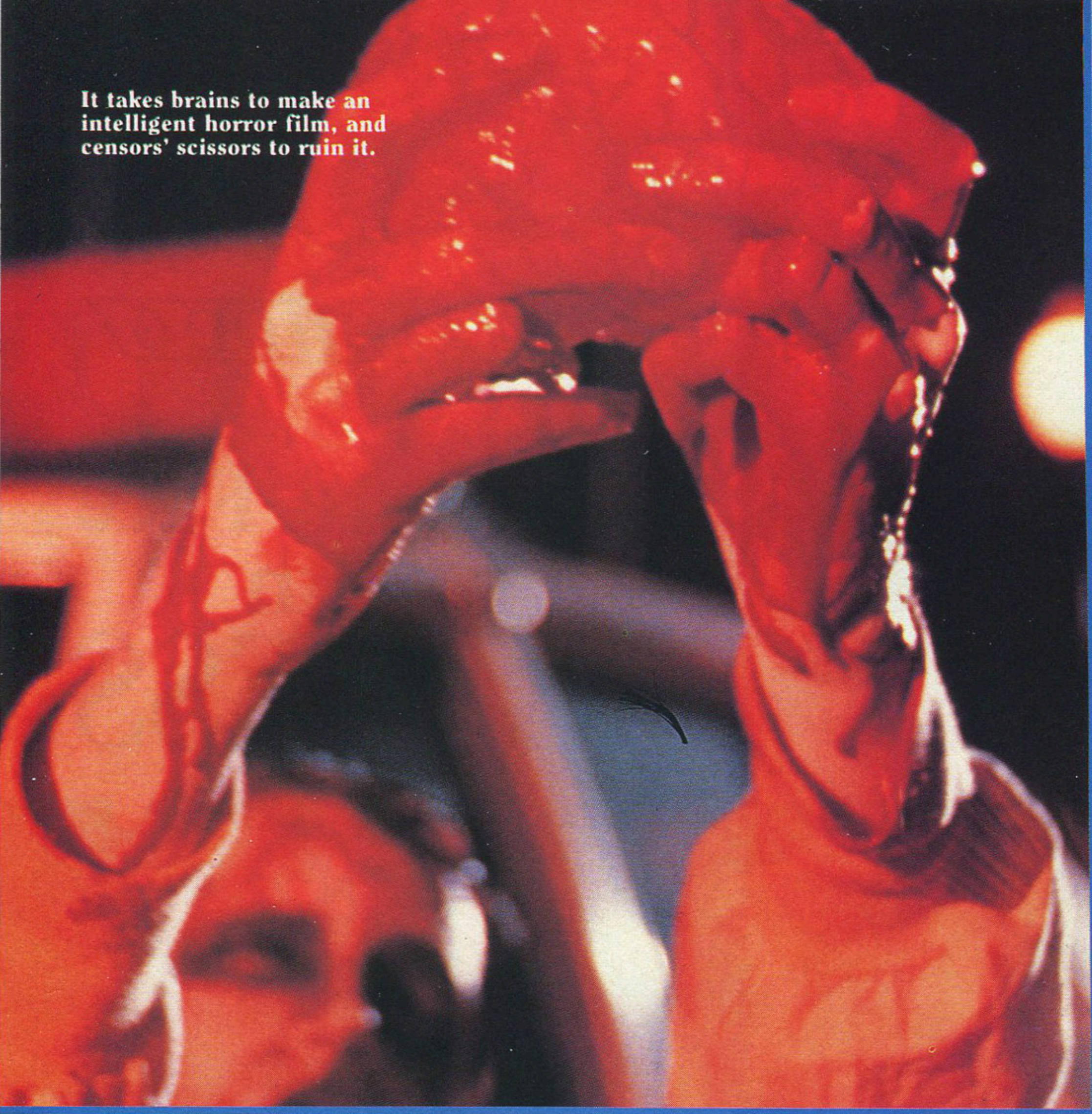
Misty mesa nowhere/A half a mile to Pa-ra-dise/Tell me what you find there/Beyond the scene of cold disguise/Three dimension rainbows rise/before your eyes/Draw the shades down/Watch this wool unwind/and see right through those/con-fi-den-tial phone calls...

Unpublished poetry of T.S. Eliot? A newly unearthed subtraction from Molly Bloom's soliloquy? No way, GoreZonians; it's the lyric to Romeo Mussamurra's "Faceless," the love theme from Jess Franco's long-awaited film of the same title! Vocalized in sparkling Barry Manilow intonations by Vincenzo Thoma, the song pops up throughout the movie at the drop of a—well, a surgically removed face, and becomes perhaps the most endearing musical interlude in horror films since the Templar Chant of the *Blind Dead* quartet. And now *you* can hear it!

While there remains no announced plan to release *Faceless* in the United States (it has long been available on French video under the title *Predateurs de la Nuit*, "Predators of the Night"), it is already available on Canadian videocassette from the Toronto-based label, Malofilm.

Faceless is the first movie that the ultra-prolific Franco has made with a complete 50-member production crew in nearly 20 years (since *Count Dracula* in 1970), and the result is easily one of his 10 best films: a slick, sick, all-star production that unreels like a *That's Entertainment* of European horror sleaze. The film stars Helmut Berger (of *Dorian Gray* infamy) as Dr. Flamand, Telly Savalas, French hardcore actress Brigitte Lehaie in her first fully clothed part, Chris Mitchum doing Clint Eastwood better than Eastwood can nowadays, Anton Diffring (the late *Circus of Horrors* superstar in his last role), Caroline Munro as a kidnapped, coked-up fashion model, Gerald Zalcr- (the TV screen cut off the rest


It takes brains to make an intelligent horror film, and censors' scissors to ruin it.

of his name, but he played the memorable Mr. Hyde in Borowczyk's *Bloodlust*), and Howard Vernon and Lina Romay as Professor and Mrs. Orloff. In a nod to Edgar Wallace enthusiasts, Franco names two characters "Bryan Wallace" and "The Ringer." No movie has starred this many of my idols since *House of the Long Shadows*; every time a new actor appeared onscreen, I found myself filled with warm, nostalgic affection. To quote Diffring's Nazi surgeon, "Deep down, I'm a real sentimentalist." And would you believe it? *Faceless* is a Christmas movie!

Faceless is now drill-less, with this scene's deletion.

Jeff Deverett, Malofilm's General Manager, confided that Malofilm had more difficulties getting *Faceless* past the Ontario Film Review Board than with any release since Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*, back in 1988. The celluloid snipers at the OFRB imposed six (short) cuts on the 94-minute film, amounting to a total of less than three minutes. They instructed Malofilm to delete: Brigitte Lehaie inserting a hypodermic needle into patient Stephane Audran's eye (about 34-35 minutes into the film); the scene of Gordon—Dr. Flamand's subhuman assistant—revving up a chainsaw in the operating room and removing a skinned face donor's head (55); a brief shot of Lehaie plunging scissors jnto a male prostitute's neck (68); Gordon using a power drill to nail a nosy hospital attendant through the head, as she cowers in a closet (80); and lastly, all scenes of the graphic, surgical removal of facial tissue and the placing of this tissue on Flamand's daughter's face (84-86).

The Watchdog was able to screen an uncut copy of *Faceless* along with Malofilm's edited version, and while it's always better to see the unedited version of anything, I must say that the movie's special makeup FX are pretty crude, and the loss of some of these actually enhances the impact of some scenes (particularly the first operating room mishap). I've got to question the clarity of the OFRB's judgment, however. For example, while they objected to the chainsaw removal of a faceless dummy's head, they allowed Malofilm to retain what immediately follows—Gordon lifting the severed head by the hair and kissing it tenderly on the lips…I mean, *teeth*.

If you're fed up with waiting for some American label to release this gem, write the Malofilm Group for ordering information at 22 Davisville Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M4S 1E8, Canada.

THE LONG & THE SHORT OF "PIT"

Imperial Video Corporation—who have brought fine European horror fare like Michele Soavi's *Stagefright* and Lamberto Bava's *Demons 2* to U.S. video—have a new release that's getting loads of attention.

Dead Pit, a 1989 American production directed and co-scripted by Brett Leonard, was issued earlier this year in the first "electronic, three-dimensional" video box. (Of course, one could argue that *all* video boxes are three-dimensional, but let's not spoil their fun.) The box is made from standard cardboard, but the front is plated top-to-bottom in molded plastic, which allows the shape of a zombie to "push forth" from the flat background. If you touch the area beside his rotting hand that says, "Press Here," the zombie's beady little eyes flash on and off for about a minute. It's reportedly good for up to 10,000 plays—certainly more than you can say for the cassette inside. (I'll just assume somebody at

Imperial must have had a lot of laughs with mine before they sent it out.) Imperial had earlier released two other videos, including *Black Roses* (a 1988 production already aired on the USA Network, featuring Julie Adams), with similar box gimmicks.

So how's the film itself? *Dead Pit* may be derivative, but it's surprisingly watchable, blending elements from Romero's *Dead* films and Stuart Gordon's *Re-Animator* with a story that basically weds Lucio Fulci's *The Beyond* and *The House by the Cemetery*, so the movie's heart is in the right place. The villain (an undead, messianic surgeon named Dr. Ramzi) is creatively designed, and there's a good deal of FX mayhem supplied by Ed Martinez. Unfortunately, a good deal of this has inexplicably remained on the cutting room floor.

The videocassette carries no MPAA rating, so the fact that cuts were made seems rather curious. Here's what got glossed over by some fast cutting: Ramzi slowly inserting a hypodermic syringe into a patient's tear duct; a body with its eye gouged out, as seen by Jane on the floor; a close-up of the Nurse's bloodied head as she slams lifelessly onto the floor; a policeman's head being slowly crushed between a zombie's hands on the patrol car; Nurse Kygar's head being crushed by the vengeful Nurse Robbins; the gory, reanimated remains of Nurse Kygar walking into close-up toward Dr. Swan in the bright hospital restroom, where she begins to messily devour someone's brain; a male hospital intern being crushed, torn apart and eaten by the invading hordes of walking dead; and Ramzi's experimental surgery on Dr. Swan, whose exposed brain is sadistically penetrated by long probes and wires.

The box lists the running time as "approximately 95 minutes."

CUT THE CABLE

The Watchdog has been noticing some new, disturbing trends on the American video scene, this time involving premium cable television channels.

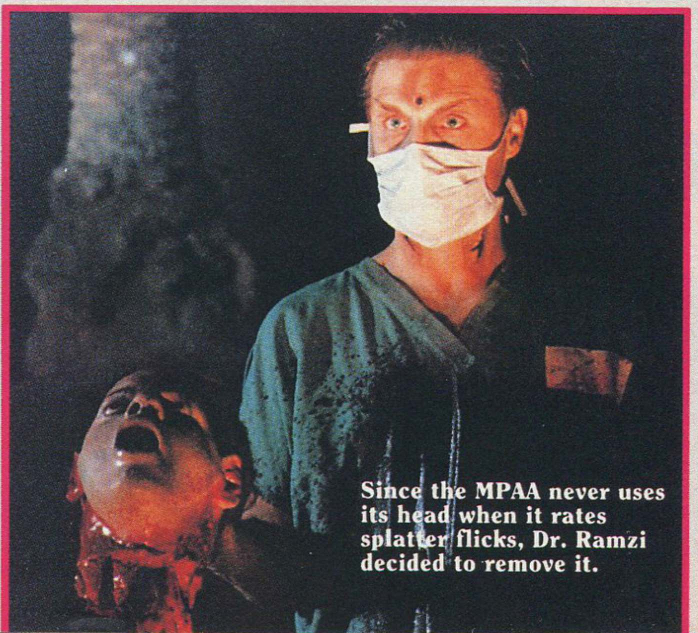
"Lordie, Miss Scarlett, I don't know nothin' 'bout birthin' babies."

When you pay for a cable channel that specializes in presenting commercial-free feature films, it's the consumer's assumption that these films will always be shown *uncut*. In recent months, erotic films shown on both Showtime and Cinemax have proven to be consistently less steamy on Showtime, which either obtains "cool" versions or snips out certain details of overfriendly contact. Since acquiring The Disney Channel, the Watchdog has been aghast to find several words and scenes edited from Disney Late Night presentations (which the network smugly portrays in their ads as being "For the Adult Viewer"). Disney does not precede the films with the admission that they have been edited for broadcast. Innocuous and unexploitative bare-bottom shots have been demooned from such films as *Made in Heaven* (Timothy Hutton), *Splash* (Daryl Hannah) and Ray Harryhausen's *Clash of the Titans* (Judi Bowker's body double). *Titans* was also jettisoned of a brief, non-objectionable shot of a mother nursing her child, and a good deal of graphic gore footage of the Medusa's decapitation by Perseus (Harry Hamlin). The "S" word is regularly eliminated from those PG-rated films brazen enough to include it, as are the "G" and "JC" words (utterances that take Our Lord's name in vain).

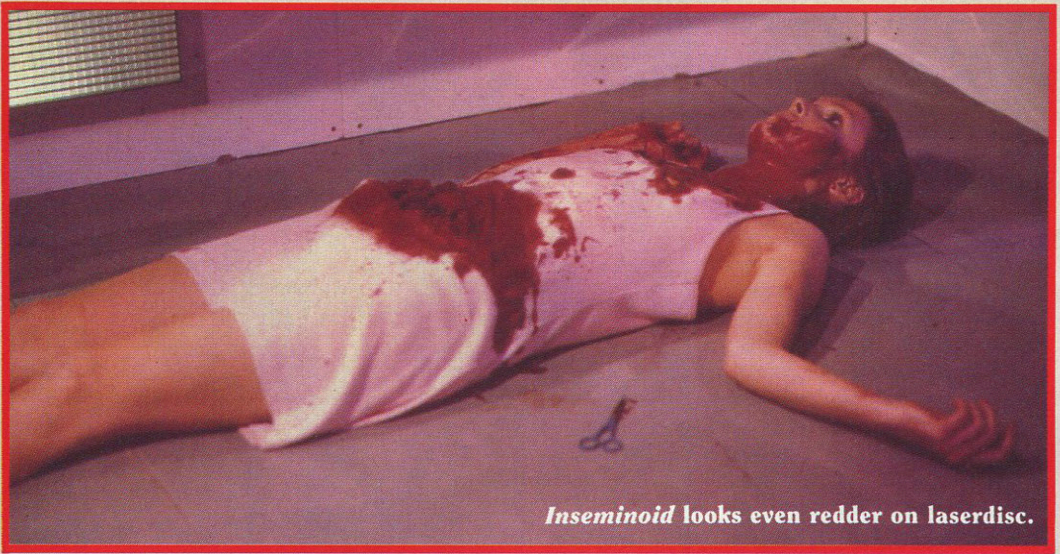
Promos shown on The Disney Channel in April for their May premiere of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* snipped out Joanna Cassidy's famous line, "Is that a rabbit in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?" It will be interesting to see how Robert Zemeckis' film (particularly Baby Herman's dialogue) fares when it finally reaches the airwaves.

The Watchdog has been aghast to find several words and scenes edited from Disney Late Nite presentations.

Though it's not a premium channel (you don't pay extra to receive it), The Comedy Channel has struck the most insulting blow to its viewership with a program (aired Saturday afternoon and evening, and in Sunday's wee hours) called *Mystery Science Theater 3000*. The show's basic premise is that an astronaut and his two robot pals, stuck on the slow spaceship back to Earth, are being entertained with weekly transmissions of movies unfit for earthly consumption. What follows is a movie, with commercial interruptions, shown *behind* the silhouettes of our three idiot hosts, whose job it is to talk back to the screen with relentless,


Since the MPAA never uses its head when it rates splatter flicks, Dr. Ramzi decided to remove it.

Dead Pit Photos: Gary Ruble



Inseminoid **looks even redder on laserdisc.**

Photo: Copyright Jupiter Films

witless asinisms until "The End." (That's right, the reason you no longer go to movie theaters is now the reason you should sign up for HA! instead of The Comedy Channel.) Some of the movies recently insulted on *Mystery Science Theater 3000* are *The Mad Monster*, *The Slime People*, Mamie Van Doren in *Untamed Youth* (they talked throughout Eddie Cochran's only song!) and Willis O'Brien's ultra-rare *The Black Scorpion*—all the more aggravating for being presented in gorgeous, pristine condition! One can only hope that The Sci-Fi Channel will present some of these state-of-the-art transfers properly, when it begins broadcasting later this year.

CLV CI'S ASAP, OK?

In an unusual marketing move last April, Image Entertainment released nine new laserdisc titles for *one month only*. The titles were: Jed Johnson's *Andy Warhol's Bad* (1977); David Cronenberg's early masterpiece *The Brood* (1979); Allan Holzman's *Forbidden World* (1982); Larry Cohen's *God Told Me To* (a.k.a. *Demon*, 1977); Norman J. Warren's *Horror Planet* (a.k.a. *Inseminoid*, 1982); *The Last Days of Man on Earth* (New World Pictures' bluntly abbreviated version of Robert Fuest's *The Final Programme*, 1973); *A Little Night Music*, Harold Prince's 1978 film of Stephen Sondheim's Bergman-inspired musical; the 141-minute "restored" version of Peter Medak's *The Ruling Class* (1972, which originally ran *154* minutes); and Stephanie Rothman's *The Velvet Vampire* (1971). All titles were priced at $39.95, except the extra-long *A Little Night Music* and *The Ruling Class*, which listed at $49.95.

The nine titles were licensed to Image by Nelson Entertainment for a mere 30 days—the time remaining before Nelson lost all rights to said material (on June 1, 1990). The decision to release was reportedly so sudden that national video magazines could not be notified and many discount video outlets simply spread the word as best they could, while accepting incoming orders. Though Image Entertainment was unable to accept orders for these titles past their strictly enforced cut-off date of May 31, copies may still be found for sale or rental in outlets clever enough to have ordered them in quantity.

It's certainly nice to have them—especially *The Brood* (one of GoreZonia's most intensely awaited laser titles)—but it's going to fry more than a few couch potatoes if Limited Time Ordering becomes a common practice.

In the meantime: instant collector's items, folks!

The Disney Channel butchers deserve to turn to stone; they're even censoring innocuous, tame fare like ***Clash of the Titans*****.**

Photo: Copyright MGM

AN APOLOGY

Last issue's column closed with some ill-chosen, discouraging words about the mail-order service Video Mania, based on careless allegations sent in by various Watchdog informants. Regrettably, it has since come to my attention that a few of the statements made either misinterpreted the truth or were just plain false. It's fitting to close this column by setting the record straight:

First, Video Mania's copies of *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* are not bootlegs or dupes; Barry Kaufman has assured me that he sells only his remaining copies of the film's original release on the Super Video label. Second, Video Mania does *not* sell bootleg or dupe cassettes. This misinformation was presumably based on their handling of releases by American Entertainment International, a public domain video service. This description doesn't make AEI a "dupe" service; all their titles are professionally mastered from 16mm and 35mm prints, not simply duped from another label's recording. There *is* a distinction, folks. Third, Video Mania never claimed to have a 95-minute version of *Count Dracula's Great Love*, only a "complete and uncut" version; nor have they claimed that their version is authorized by Paul Naschy, nor does it need to be.

Since my column appeared, Video Mania has introduced a rental service, so if there's something you're thinking of buying from them but aren't 100 percent sure about, here's a way you can drive it around the block first. Write Video Mania at Suite 129, 2520 N. Lincoln, Chicago, IL 60614 for more details.

The Video Watchdog extends his paw in sincere apology to Barry Kaufman and Video Mania for anything this column reported to the contrary. I never said I was perfect. Just a perfection*ist*.

TEACHERS

(continued from page 21)

eryone does the best they can do. But what comes out is often not what I signed for. As they say, shit happens. I'm not inclined to bad-mouth anyone for it."

Ah, but we can coax a few memories out of her. "People always ask me about *Blacula,*" she sighs, rolling her eyes. "I have to break their hearts and tell them I *wasn't* in *Blacula*—I was in *Scream Blacula Scream.* I liked working with William Marshall, but generally speaking, horror sequels? *Ugh!*" Tell us about it, Pam.

The Disney misfire *Something Wicked This Way Comes* stands more firmly on Grier's good side. Essaying a dual role as the World's Most Beautiful Woman (a clear case of typecasting, as this reporter can attest) and the hideous Dust Witch, Grier provided much of the oversweetened Bradbury adaption's best chills. "I was a little surprised at how nice—as in *too* nice—that film came out," she recalls. "Bradbury's book is so dark and wonderful. As a kid, I loved his writing, and horror and science fiction in general. The people who write that stuff fascinate me, because they bring a wholly nonexistent world into existence. They give birth to new concepts."

Class of 1999 displays Grier in fine form as the humanoid Chem teacher/flamethrower Ms. Connors. The military background is something she shares with her character; Grier's father was an Air Force major, and she grew up on Strategic Air Command bases across the globe. (Other trivia from Grier's familial roster: She's a first cousin of Rosie Grier, star of the mind-boggling *The Thing with Two Heads.*) Like Kilpatrick, she has high praise for robotics expert/second unit director Eric Allard, with whom she will be completing a key fire-spouting sequence as soon as lunch is over.

"You could say I'm hopeful about this film," she offers. "The budget's there, and the patience and time, so good things are happening. These people work hard, and Mark Lester knows what he's doing. I just reserve judgment until I see the finished movie. I'll always have more work coming, so no single movie will sink my career. All dashed hopes really do is make you grow bitter.

"It's like the racial division in the movies," Grier concludes. "I've gotten to work with Paul Newman in *Fort Apache: The Bronx,* Jason Robards in *Something Wicked,* Burt Lancaster in *Rocket Gibraltar.* I am a member of the Academy, admiring my peers from afar. Despite this, there's nothing one person can do about the abyss between minority actors, and say, Dustin Hoffman or Meryl Streep, unless you plan a piece that incorporates it and has a direction to go in that will sell tickets. That's the only reason a movie gets made—because it will sell tickets."

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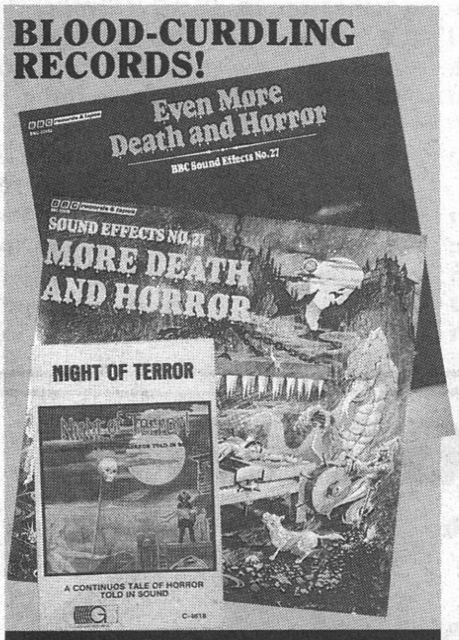

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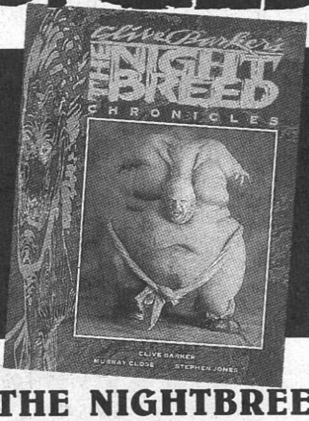

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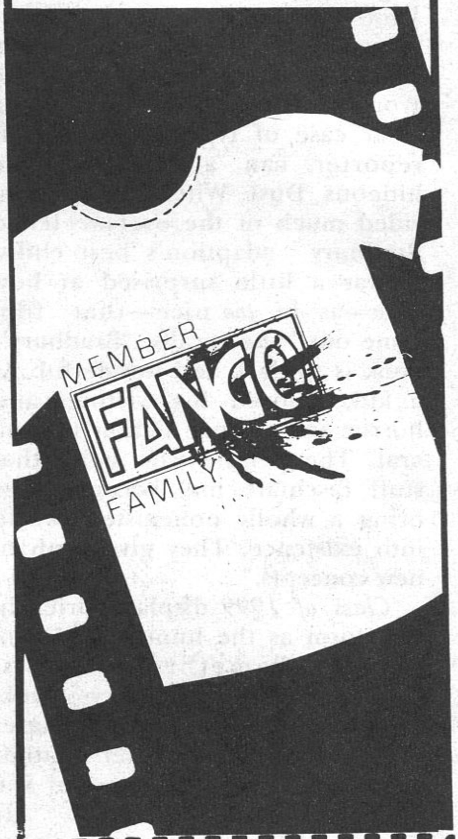

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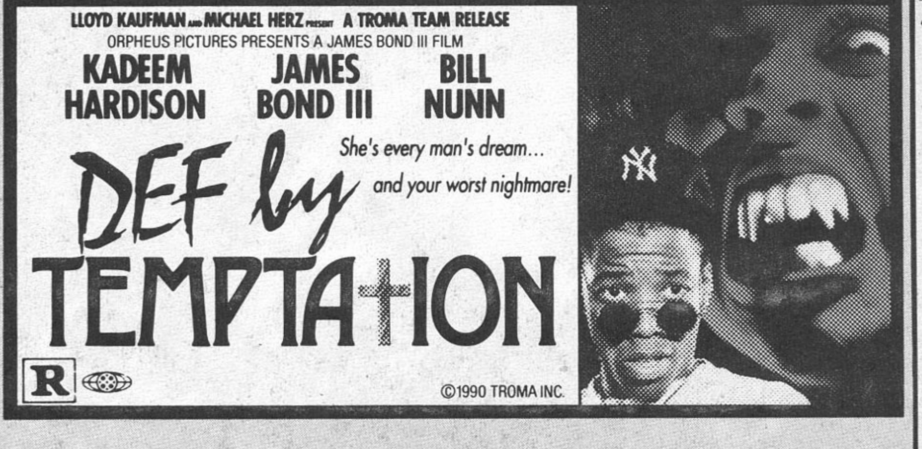
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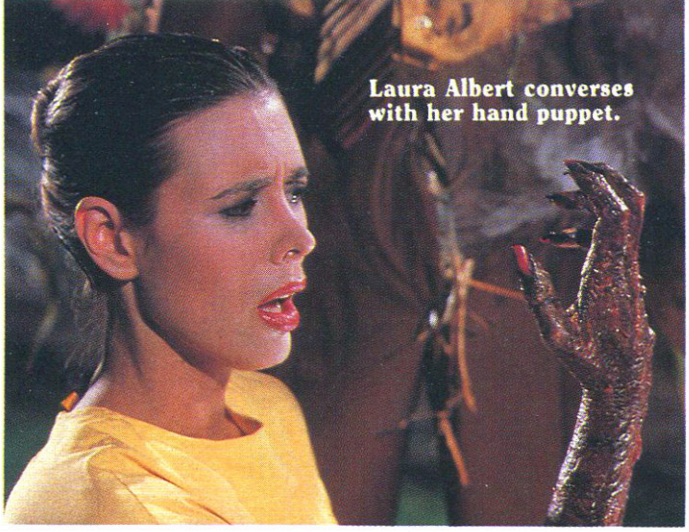
By MICHAEL GINGOLD

REVIEW

DR. CALIGARI

Is *Dr. Caligari* good brain food or a sorry chef's salad?

> *"The movie's unceasing weirdness restricts involvement with it."*


Laura Albert converses with her hand puppet.

Photos: Abram Perlstein/Copyright 1989 Steiner Films

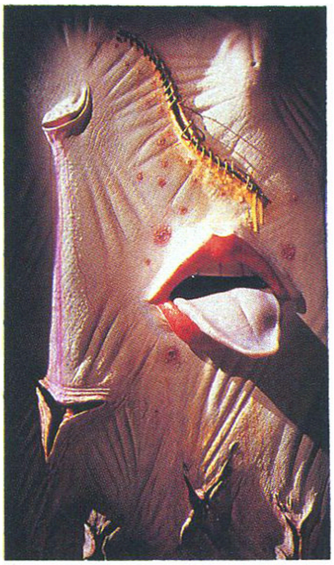
It's *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* without the music! It's a Calvin Klein's Obsession ad as directed by David Cronenberg! It's *Dr. Caligari*, and it's not as much fun as these descriptions might make it sound.

That's too bad, since there are some honest laughs and strikingly bizarre sights in this update of the 1919 *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. That film was not only a keystone of German expressionism but an influence on many a modern cult filmmaker, with its deliberately stylized lighting, distorted sets and skewed photography. The new version, directed and cowritten by Stephen (*Cafe Flesh*) Sayadian, updates the original's silent, black-and-white images with neon color schemes and an exaggeratedly arch style of acting. While this approach elicits some funny moments, the overall result is rather tiring.

The title refers not to the original Caligari but to his granddaughter (Madeleine Reynal), eagerly upholding the family name by conducting bizarre psychiatric experiments. Since this is the '90s, most of the disorders on view involve sex in one way or another, and the key subplot involves one Mr. Van Houten (Gene Zerna), who's afraid of sex, and his wife (Laura Albert), who is anything but. She is given to weird erotic dreams and fantasies (which look not much stranger than anything else in the movie), and her husband is reluctantly convinced to check her into Caligari's Insane Asylum (CIA, heh, heh). A few of the other patients we meet there include Gus Pratt (John Durbin), a psycho cannibal who gets off on electroshock therapy ("It's like a thousand points of light!"), a woman who keeps saying "chinchilla," and a girl with a hormonal imbalance resulting in 3-foot-long breasts. Meanwhile, a couple of doctors try to convince asylum director Dr. Avol (the late Fox Harris, a veteran of several Alex Cox and Fred Olen Ray movies) that Caligari is up to no good. With the mad doctor's help, a number of these characters will have traded psyches by the end of the movie.

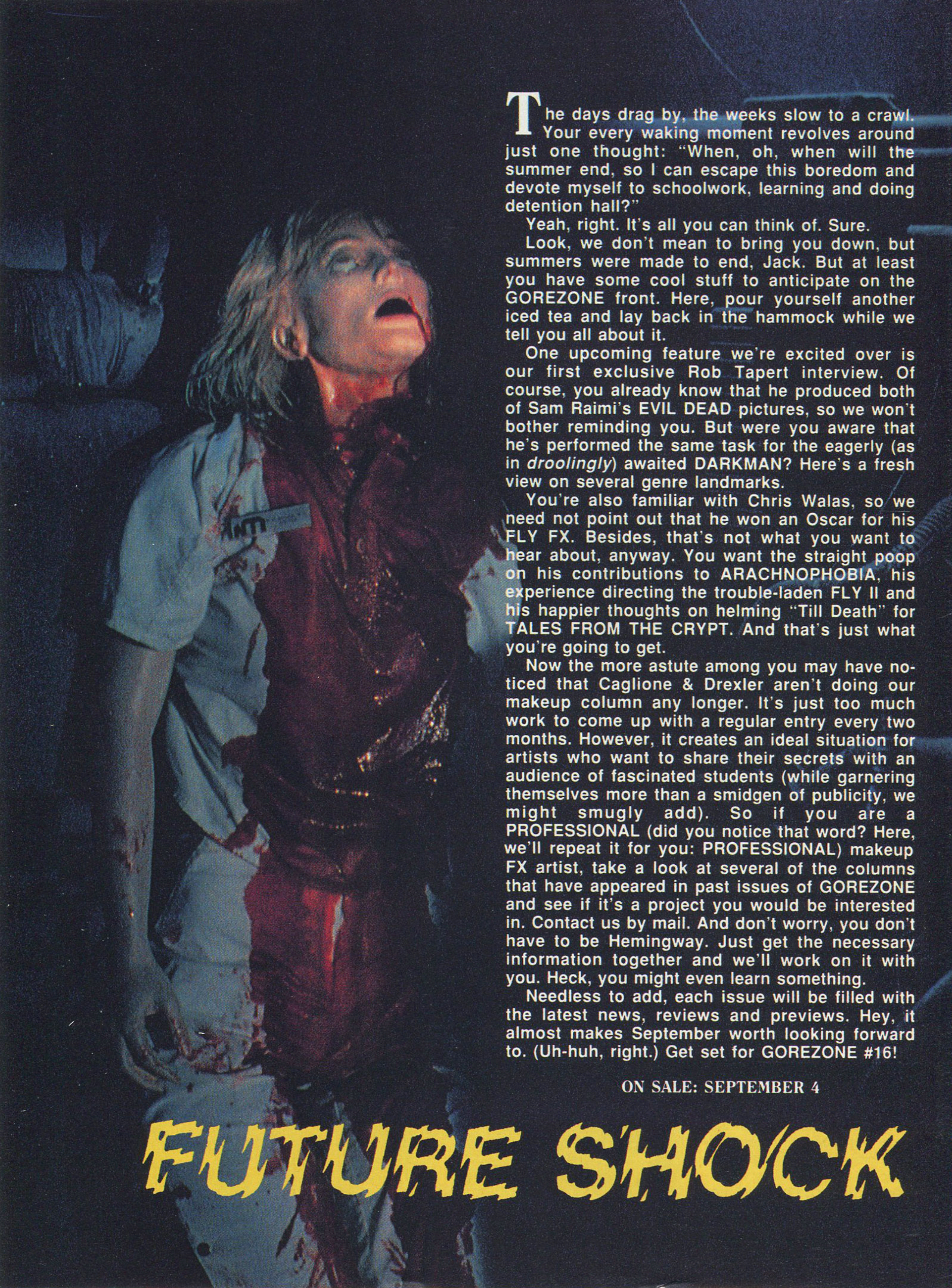
All of these people behave in a manner that should be familiar to anyone who's spent time taking in performance art. The actors pose like Egyptians, speak in clipped, emotionless tones and frequently exit the frame vertically; concepts of "normal" are completely alien to these performances. But without any recognizable normality for the audience to get a hook into (like the working-class locations in *Eraserhead* or Brad and Janet in *Rocky Horror Picture Show*), the effect is quickly distancing. Strangeness of this kind comes off as much less strange (and therefore less intriguing) when there's nothing for it to play against. That means that the film's humor works in fits and starts; you may laugh, but the moment the laugh is over, you're left impatiently awaiting the next one.

Sayadian is more successful at creating bizarre images, a few of which are memorably perverse. There's a lengthy scene in which Mrs. Van Houten is confined to a room at the asylum where the door suddenly becomes made of skin, dripping blood and drug capsules from open wounds and extruding a huge tongue that Mrs. Van Houten...well, it's not pretty. Then there's the moment where Dr. Caligari serves up a cake that bleeds and sends out gory claws when cut open. Ken Diaz and Steve Patino's FX, while not exactly realistic, are certainly convincing enough on a surreal level; equally evocative are Mitchell Froom's bass-heavy score and Sayadian's own production design. In fact, Sayadian seems to have fully accomplished exactly what he set out to do, which is more than you can say for the majority of recent directors. It's just that the movie's unceasing weirdness restricts emotional involvement with it.


***Dr. Caligari* is weird for weird's sake and bad for Pete's sake.**

It's highly likely, of course, that I didn't see *Dr. Caligari* under the proper conditions, and that an upscale screening room is not the right venue for appreciating this kind of film. (Taken on face value, *Rocky Horror* isn't that great a movie, either.) The best way to see *Dr. Caligari* is probably to wait until a few weeks into its midnight show run, then check it out with a cult audience. As any *Rocky Horror* fan will tell you, it's the audience response that's half the fun at a movie like this.

"Where the hell am I going to find a head for this thing?" ponders the evil Dr. Caligari.



FUTURE SHOCK

The days drag by, the weeks slow to a crawl. Your every waking moment revolves around just one thought: "When, oh, when will the summer end, so I can escape this boredom and devote myself to schoolwork, learning and doing detention hall?"

Yeah, right. It's all you can think of. Sure.

Look, we don't mean to bring you down, but summers were made to end, Jack. But at least you have some cool stuff to anticipate on the GOREZONE front. Here, pour yourself another iced tea and lay back in the hammock while we tell you all about it.

One upcoming feature we're excited over is our first exclusive Rob Tapert interview. Of course, you already know that he produced both of Sam Raimi's EVIL DEAD pictures, so we won't bother reminding you. But were you aware that he's performed the same task for the eagerly (as in *droolingly*) awaited DARKMAN? Here's a fresh view on several genre landmarks.

You're also familiar with Chris Walas, so we need not point out that he won an Oscar for his FLY FX. Besides, that's not what you want to hear about, anyway. You want the straight poop on his contributions to ARACHNOPHOBIA, his experience directing the trouble-laden FLY II and his happier thoughts on helming "Till Death" for TALES FROM THE CRYPT. And that's just what you're going to get.

Now the more astute among you may have noticed that Caglione & Drexler aren't doing our makeup column any longer. It's just too much work to come up with a regular entry every two months. However, it creates an ideal situation for artists who want to share their secrets with an audience of fascinated students (while garnering themselves more than a smidgen of publicity, we might smugly add). So if you are a PROFESSIONAL (did you notice that word? Here, we'll repeat it for you: PROFESSIONAL) makeup FX artist, take a look at several of the columns that have appeared in past issues of GOREZONE and see if it's a project you would be interested in. Contact us by mail. And don't worry, you don't have to be Hemingway. Just get the necessary information together and we'll work on it with you. Heck, you might even learn something.

Needless to add, each issue will be filled with the latest news, reviews and previews. Hey, it almost makes September worth looking forward to. (Uh-huh, right.) Get set for GOREZONE #16!

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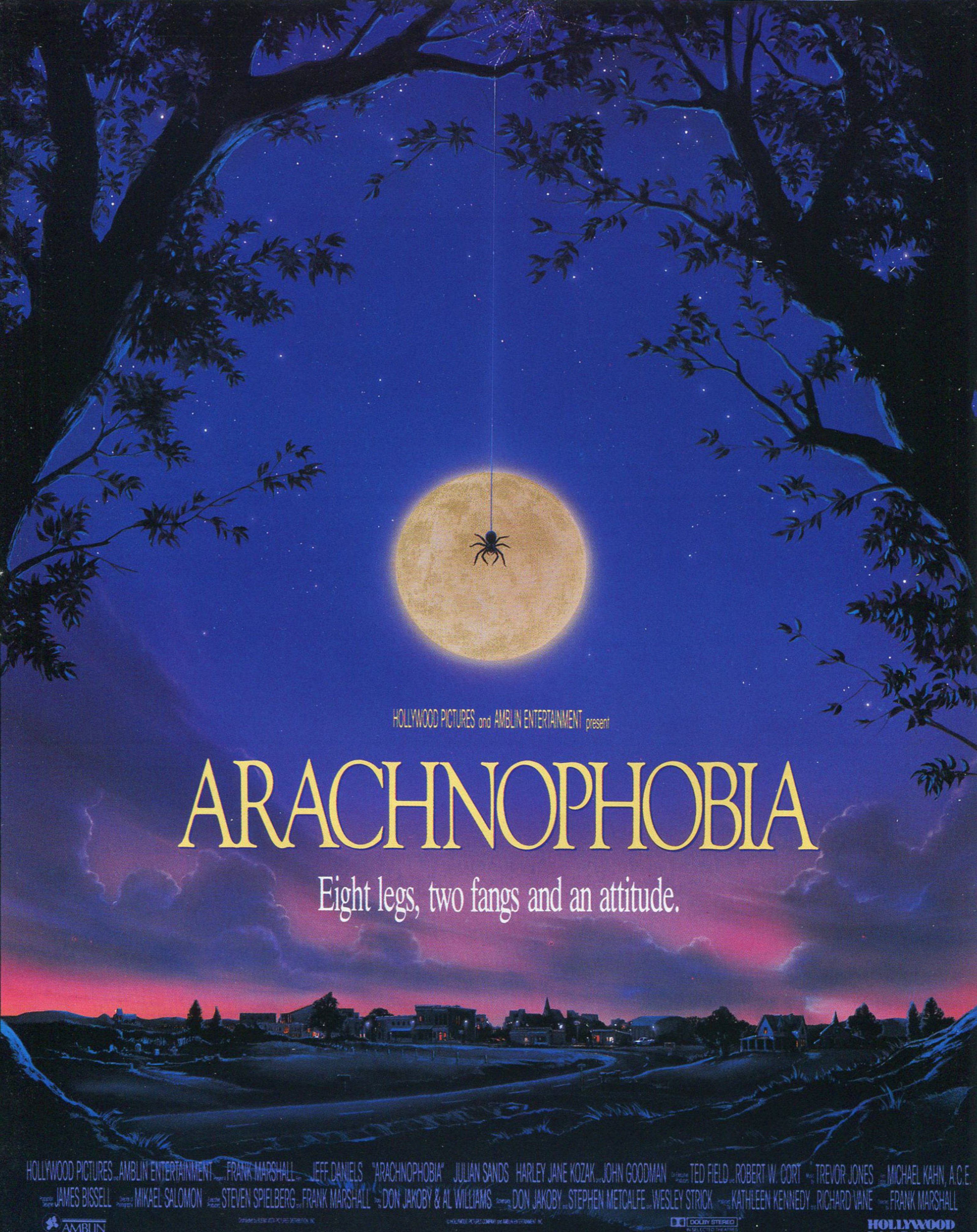

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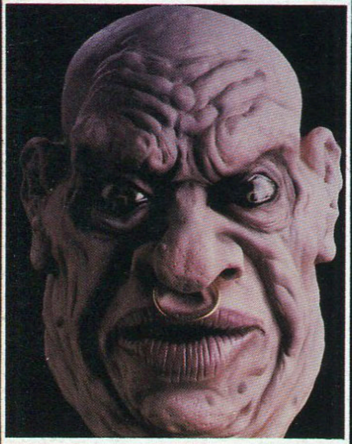
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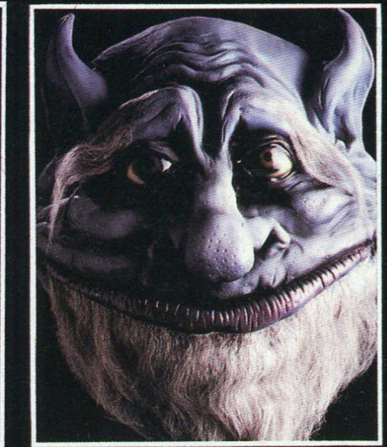
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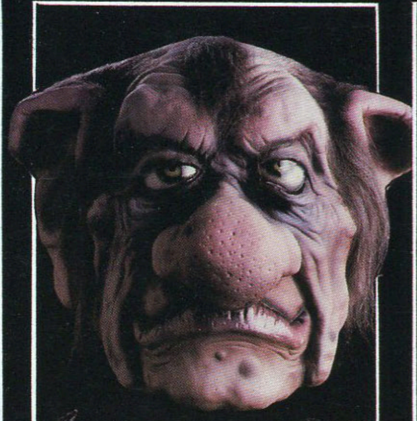
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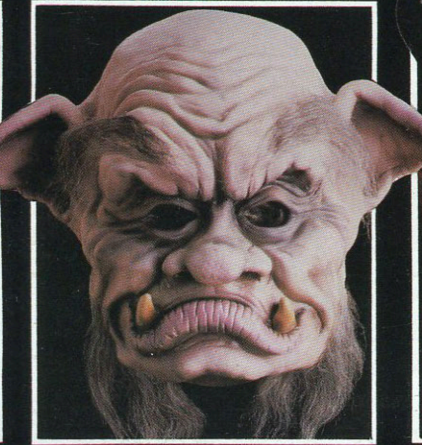
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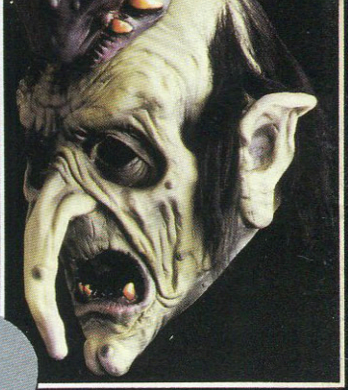
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